Commentary
May 2002

Talking (and Trading) with the Enemy

Joshua Muravchik
Gary Milhollin

Judaism Beyond Words

David Gelernter

Uncle Jack—A Story

Joseph Epstein

How Inept Is the FBI?

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Nazis, Jews, and "Mirroring Evil"

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The Great American Songbook: A Conclusion

Terry Teachout

Books in Review

Kevin Shapiro • David Pryce-Jones • Kay S. Hymowitz
Frederick W. Kagan • Dan Seligman

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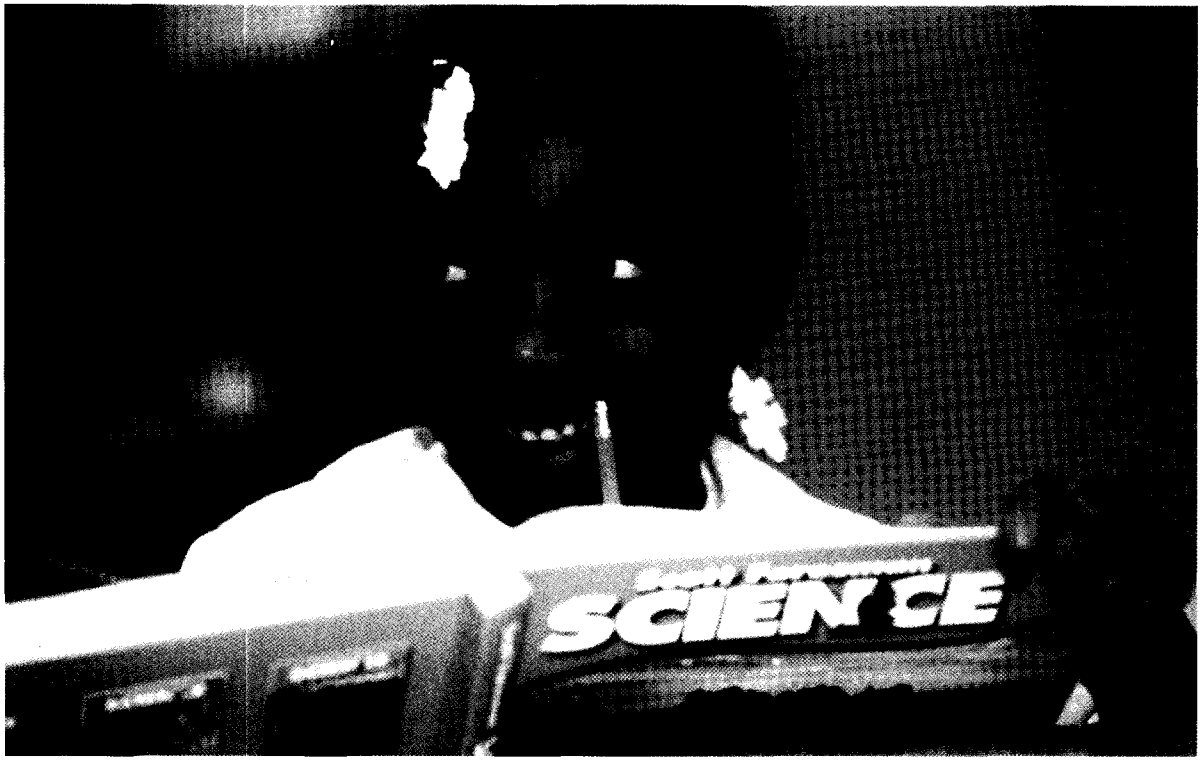

A Repeat Performance: Sandra Feldman and School Choice Falsehoods

Sandra Feldman, president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), takes a backseat to no one when it comes to willful misrepresentation about school choice programs.

Last October we documented her false claim — broadcast on National Public Radio — that vouchers for low-income Cleveland parents forced a cut in public school kindergarten programs. Feldman's own research staff explained that they could not back up that statement. In fact, the Cleveland Municipal School District confirmed that kindergarten programs had *expanded* after the start of the school choice program there.

We predicted more inaccurate statements from Feldman. We were correct.

Parental School Choice is Widespread — Unless You're Poor.

Feldman recently wrote in *USA Today* that "wherever vouchers have been used" students have not made significant academic gains. Feldman further claimed that unnamed "researchers now know that the [voucher] experiment has failed."

The AFT names no "researcher" to support Feldman's claim. However, here are three researchers who take the opposite view.

Tom Loveless, Ph.D., a Senior Fellow in Governmental Studies at The Brookings Institution, directs the Brown Center on Education Policy. In September 2001, Dr. Loveless wrote, "Although controversial, research generally shows positive effects for students using vouchers to attend private schools."

Kim Metcalf, Ph.D., director of the Indiana University Center for Evaluation, is the independent evaluator of Cleveland's school choice program. Dr. Metcalf's most recent report describes the "statistically significant positive impact of the program on students' academic achievement, particularly as they progress beyond the early primary grades."

Paul Hill, Ph.D., directs the Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington. Dr. Hill previously worked for 17 years as a Senior Social Scientist in RAND's Washington, D.C., office. He said, "Rigorously controlled studies of the links between vouchers and student achievement ... are mildly positive in virtually every case ... The weight of evidence is definitely toward positive effects [except for] middle-school boys in the District of Columbia."

Why does the president of the American Federation of Teachers continue a campaign of misinformation about the effort to expand educational options for low-income parents?

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Black Alliance for Educational Options

For more information go to: www.schoolchoiceinfo.org or www.baeo.org

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Commentary®

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American Jewish Committee
Harold Tanner,
President

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Commentary
May 2002

Letters from Readers

The Battle Ahead

To the Editor:

Norman Podhoretz has written the equivalent, for World War IV, of George F. Kennan's "X" article, the essay published anonymously in *Foreign Affairs* in 1947 that set forth the American strategy for the cold war ["How to Win World War IV," February].

Mr. Podhoretz relentlessly chronicles our quarter-century of fecklessness in the face of Middle Eastern terrorism and the depredations of rogue states, and our resulting reputation as a paper tiger that would crumble if attacked. Even the first Bush administration's laudable conduct of the 1991 Gulf war was marred by our abandonment of Iraq's Kurds and Shiites when they rebelled at our urging; they were massacred at the hands of Saddam Hussein's Republican Guards.

Our fecklessness has had many causes—fear of further casualties, for example, led us to leave Lebanon and Somalia once we had been bloodied—but one recent cause has been a conviction shared by the State Department and the CIA that there is no relationship between Middle Eastern terrorism and Iraq. Some in each agency have forgotten what Donald Rumsfeld concluded as chairman of the 1998 commission on the ballistic-missile threat: "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence."

Others define the issue away by discussing only those predator states that "sponsor" terrorism. It may be true that Iraq does not normally provide full funding or precise directions for terrorist operations, and in that sense is not often a "sponsor." But lesser assistance can be equally murderous. What of the fact that two American UN inspectors and three Iraqi defectors have all given details of Iraq's training of Islamic extremists—at a facility run by one of Saddam Hussein's sons—in the art of hijacking a passenger aircraft with knives?

Other than giving me far too much credit for prescience in 1993-95 (the years I served as director of the CIA), Mr. Podhoretz's fine article goes astray in only two respects. First, he agrees with those who characterize what the U.S. must do as an "imperial mission" or the establishment of a Middle Eastern "protectorate." Speaking this way will alienate some who might otherwise be persuaded by his argument.

In addition, Mr. Podhoretz tilts toward suggesting that our problem is Islam in general. But the fascist Baathist regimes of Iraq and Syria are secular, and the ideological Islamists, whether Sunni or Shiite, are a small percentage (although still tens of millions) of Muslims. In World War IV we can and must make common cause with many hundreds of millions of decent and reasonable Muslims.

After a hard struggle, as Mr. Podhoretz wisely stresses, we can hope to win the only victory that in this global age can give us a chance for peace: bringing to the Middle East the same transition toward freedom and democracy that our victories in the first three world wars brought directly to a substantial majority of the nations of Eurasia, and indirectly to much of South America and Africa as well. A hard fight that will take many years? Certainly. But what could be more important?

R. James Woolsey
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor:

Norman Podhoretz refreshingly avoids the usual conservative tendency and blames not just Clinton but Reagan and Bush, Sr. as well for our inadequate response to terrorism in recent years. But was it just the administrations themselves that were

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willing to tolerate a certain amount of low-level terrorist violence against Americans? What about the American public? Would it have tolerated military actions like those currently under way, however necessary, in response to a less horrible provocation than the September 11 attacks?

BRUCE BRAGER
Arlington, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR:

Norman Podhoretz's article is the clearest, most cutting analysis written since September 11. Still, he might have softened his tough handling of President Reagan, whose main focus, I suspect, was to beat the Soviets and to avoid getting entangled with those he called "the thugs" of the Middle East. It is true that the tender feelings of Caspar Weinberger (and perhaps George P. Shultz) for oil might have played a role. But we should remember that the Soviets were primary sponsors of terrorism. Reagan was going for the head of the dragon.

In addition, though Mr. Podhoretz is right to say that maintaining our coalition proved to be a problem in conducting the Gulf war, President Bush's current coalition has not delayed or weakened the action in Afghanistan. It has, however, helped the U.S. push some ditherers to stiffen their spines. Coalitions are harmful only if they erode America's might and determination. That is why President Bush has hinted that the U.S. may go it alone if necessary.

SERGE FARCASAN
Saskatoon, Canada

TO THE EDITOR:

Norman Podhoretz's comprehensive analysis of the U.S. government's halfhearted response to terrorism over the past three decades borders on brilliance. His astute description of the deficiencies of Presidents going back to Richard Nixon greatly enhances his credibility and silences any accusations of partisanship. Ronald Reagan will undoubtedly be lionized by historians, but Mr. Podhoretz rightly discusses his tepid response to several terrorist attacks against American military personnel and civilians in the Middle East.

Tragically, even with his mixed record, Reagan did more than Nixon, Ford, Carter, and the first Bush combined. Each of these Presidents had noble intentions, but their less than energetic efforts inadvertently sent a message of indifference to terrorist fanatics. Other critics have mentioned that George W. Bush gave no indication of escalating the war on terrorism during his first eight months in office, and Mr. Podhoretz honestly notes this as well.

Still, terrorism never set foot on American soil until Bill Clinton's insouciance was proved to Osama bin Laden and his operatives. Mr. Podhoretz skillfully describes Clinton's disgraceful negligence in responding to the first World Trade Center attack, the murder of American military personnel at the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia and on the *USS Cole* in Yemen, and many other barbaric attacks. He has eloquently documented how the Clinton administration's idleness played a significant role in sowing the seeds that made September 11 possible.

STEVEN FANTINA
Phillipsburg, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR:

In his impressive account of what he calls World War IV, Norman Podhoretz disputes the claim that democracy "can grow only in a soil that has been cultivated for centuries." "After all," he writes, after World War II "the U.S. managed in a few short years to transform both Nazi Germany and imperial Japan into capitalist democracies." But the analogy is weak. Unlike today's Islamic countries, Germany already had some experience of democracy. As for Japan, it had long been successful in adapting Western technologies and attitudes to its own culture.

Even if we grant Mr. Podhoretz's analogy, though, we should recall that democratic change came to Germany and Japan only after profound physical and spiritual trauma—much greater than anything we are likely to inflict on the Islamic world. Much as we in the West are reluctant to acknowledge it, there are cultures outside of our own—and Islamic culture is one of these—that have shown themselves to be comfortable to an astonishing degree with despotism.

HERB GREER
Manchester, England

TO THE EDITOR:

Norman Podhoretz makes a cogent argument for abandoning the passivity that marked the American approach to terrorism for three decades. But he does not sufficiently emphasize that the U.S. must also jettison its policy of appeasing fundamentalist regimes like Saudi Arabia and dictatorships like Pakistan for the sake of ostensible short-term gain.

The Saudi government has been stingy with information on terrorists since the bombing of the Khobar Towers there in 1996. In the aftermath of that act of terrorism against U.S. military personnel, the Saudis rapidly arrested and executed several suspects without giving American officials access to them. An interrogation of the suspects by the U.S. may well have revealed links to al Qaeda and averted subsequent terrorist acts. More significantly, the House of Saud has been behind the funding of fundamentalist *madrassas* in the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent.

In the case of Pakistan, Mr. Podhoretz too readily accepts the rationale for America's support of that country's latest dictator. The numerous "unsolved" acts of anti-American terrorism there range from the 1979 bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad to the abduction of two Americans in Kashmir by Pakistani terrorists in 1995 to the gunning down of four American employees of Union Texas Petroleum in Karachi in November 1997. Mr. Podhoretz is right that, since September 11, Pakistan has permitted the use of its territory to launch air operations—but only for transporting soldiers, not for fighters or bombers. The U.S. received similarly superficial cooperation from Pakistan in the 1980's.

As Mr. Podhoretz argues, democracy does not need centuries to grow, even in Islamic societies. Pakistan's amputated eastern wing, Bangladesh, provides clear proof of that. The question is: when will this view prevail over America's timorousness in the region and

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its appetite for Faustian bargains?

VIJAY DANDAPANI
New York City

TO THE EDITOR:

Why is Norman Podhoretz's voice so rare? That thought struck me when, at the outset of his article, he soberly listed the attacks visited upon American soldiers, sailors, marines, diplomats, and civilians from 1970 to the present by terrorists and militant Islamists. Admittedly, in an earlier chapter of American history the sinking of the *Maine* or the *Lusitania* led the barons of yellow journalism to let slip the dogs of war by calling on this nation to "set the world free for democracy"—campaigns that only unleashed on the world an avalanche of unparalleled tyrannies. Perhaps with those precedents in mind, not to mention the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, both the American public and the press have taken the *opposite* stance to assaults far worse than the sinking of merchant ships in wartime.

Lack of outrage can be at least as morally vicious as false indignation; and so the American public owes Mr. Podhoretz a debt of gratitude. The sheer length of his list of terrorist attacks reveals a collective insouciance that has only led, as he points out, to further violence.

EDWARD T. OAKES
Regis University
Denver, Colorado

TO THE EDITOR:

Norman Podhoretz is right to fear that, in our response to Islamic and Arab aggression, we will "relapse into appeasement, diplomatic evasion, and ineffectual damage control." Consider the beliefs that have undermined us while encouraging our enemies. One is "love thine enemy," which leads to the denial and accommodation of aggression. Another is moral equivalence, which disparages the right to self-defense, and dissuades us from using our most effective weapons. Still another is that peace, rather than survival, is a national imperative, leading us to seek common ground with our adversaries.

In sum, the problem is not influencing other nations, who in any event are most supportive when America is victorious. Rather it is building our resolve, and making changes within our own nation.

ALLEN WEINGARTEN
Morristown, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR:

Norman Podhoretz refers to the 1985 hijacking of the cruise ship *Achille Lauro* by Palestinian terrorists, who murdered one of the passengers, an elderly, wheelchair-bound American tourist named Leon Klinghoffer. As for the mastermind of the attack, Abu Abbas, "the Italian authorities let him go," Mr. Podhoretz notes, and "Washington confined itself to protesting [his] release."

But the sordid tale of Abu Abbas does not end there. Over the years, Abbas has given media interviews in which he has stated unequivocally that he feels "no remorse" for the Klinghoffer murder. And in 1998, Yasir Arafat welcomed Abbas to Gaza with open arms.

The Zionist Organization of America and others urged the Clinton administration to indict Abbas and demand that Arafat surrender him for prosecution in the U.S. In May 1998, State Department spokesman James Rubin said that, though the administration "strongly believes that Abu Abbas should be punished for the crimes committed aboard the *Achille Lauro*," there were no charges pending against him in the U.S. and "the statute of limitations has long since run out." But this last point is not true. A 1996 study by the Congressional Research Service concluded that, in fact, the statute of limitations has not expired, because the statute is suspended when the suspect is a fugitive from justice.

It would certainly be an appropriate part of America's war against international terrorism for the U.S. finally to indict Abu Abbas and put every conceivable pressure on whatever regime is harboring him to hand him over. The Clinton administration, which placed a premium on its friendly relationship with Arafat, did not want to press him on the matter. One hopes the Bush administration will see things differently.

MORTON A. KLEIN
Zionist Organization of America
New York City

TO THE EDITOR:

As an Arab-American, I found Norman Podhoretz's article informative and enlightening. It broadened my awareness of the subtle tensions in the Middle East and opened my mind to the possibility of "solving" the problem of militant Islam. Militant Islamic thinking runs deep and is accompanied by intense emotion that renders a diplomatic solution unrealistic and even dangerous. But if any nation can solve the problem, it is America.

GENE NOUHAN
Hamilton, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR:

Norman Podhoretz's article has the same strident tone as those that appeared in the early 1970's in Britain, when the Irish Republican Army first began its terror campaign. But the experience of the past 30 years has taught us that the best way to fight terrorism is to wage a political war, combining the rule of law with high-quality military and intelligence work. This takes more time, patience, and resolution than lashing out in a patriotic frenzy.

Unless the U.S. wants to put a tank on every street corner in the Middle East, it must support an international structure that removes the politics of envy and hatred from that region. This will mean providing assistance to democratic movements in the Muslim world and supporting the kind of institutions that will have the confidence of international public opinion in bringing criminals to justice (the trials of Balkan war criminals and the Lockerbie bombers already provide a model). Justice has to be done, but it also has to be *seen* to be done. Following Mr. Podhoretz's advice would lead to a hollow, short-term victory, and to America's permanently attaining the status of most hated nation.

TOBY MOTTRAM
Cambridge, England

TO THE EDITOR:

I have basically agreed with Norman Podhoretz's analysis of the Middle East all my adult life, but after

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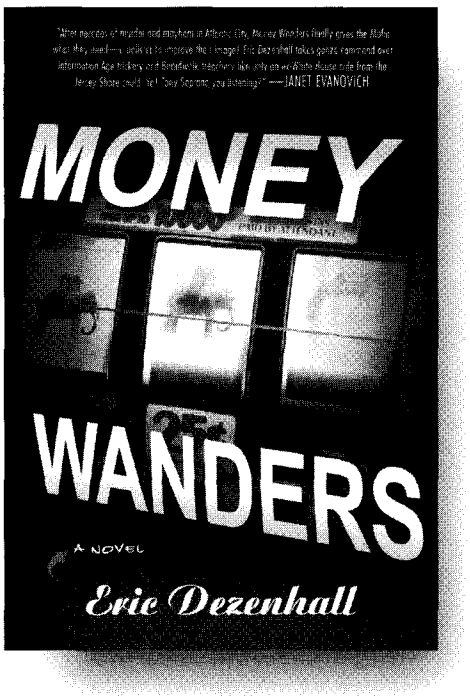

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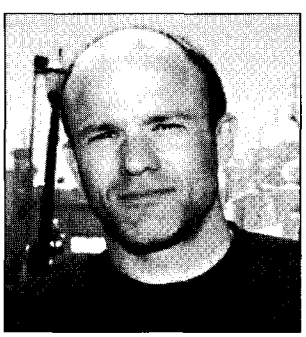

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September 11 it no longer makes sense. In his long article he makes no mention of the support the United States has given Israel since its founding, and he fails to draw any connection between that support and the horrors of the September attacks. This appears to me a denial of reality and the height of arrogance.

DANIEL R. FOLEY
New York City

TO THE EDITOR:

Norman Podhoretz seems to say that we must aggressively pursue all the states supporting terrorism and that this might involve overthrowing their present regimes. But there are many ways to resist terrorism. Will such a strategy not in fact produce even more dangerous anti-Western regimes?

PHILLIP CAGAN
New York City

NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

I am so honored by R. James Woolsey's comparison of my article to George F. Kennan's historic "X" piece of 1947 (which, alas, its author virtually repudiated in later years) that I can hardly bring myself to do more in response than express my deep gratitude.

I suspect, however, that Mr. Woolsey would prefer me to comment on the two points about which we disagree. Before doing so, I want to endorse every word he says about why we came to be considered a paper tiger by Osama bin Laden. I also want to congratulate him on his way of defining the involvement of Iraq in the terrorist network against which we are at war. This involvement is, if anything, even more "murderous," to borrow Mr. Woolsey's own word, for being sufficiently covert to supply an extra set of specious arguments to the opponents of toppling Saddam Hussein.

As it happens, since Mr. Woolsey wrote his letter, Jeffrey Goldberg, in an article in the *New Yorker* (March 25, 2002), dealt a stunning blow to those arguments by reporting a number of persuasive allegations he came upon in Kurdistan of a close link between Saddam and al Qaeda through an Iraqi terrorist organization called Ansar al-Islam. Among the allegations Goldberg lists are "charges that Ansar al-Islam has received funds directly from al Qaeda; that the intelligence service of Saddam Hussein has joint control, with al Qaeda operatives, over Ansar al-Islam; . . . [and] that a number of al Qaeda members fleeing Afghanistan have been secretly brought into territory controlled by Ansar al-Islam."

On my use of terms like "imperial mission" and "protectorate," Mr. Woolsey (as the letters from Toby Mottram and Philip Cagan demonstrate) is right in fearing that they will frighten some people away—even some who might otherwise see merit in my argument.

Nevertheless, I am convinced that this war cannot be won unless the United States works toward "regime changes" in the Arab/Muslim world and then takes a significant share of responsibility for the aftermath. Our present need to go back into Iraq more than ten years after we withdrew shows what can happen when we fail to follow up politically on a military victory. Conversely, Germany and Japan are excellent examples of what can happen when we take the opposite course.

Now, the assumption of the kind of responsibility I am talking about was known as imperialism in the past, and I realize full well that its reputation has been so besmirched that bringing it into the discussion gives polemical ammunition to those who are against waging World War IV as the President has defined it. Yet being a great believer in the intellectual and moral clarity that comes from calling things by their true names, I went out of my way to avoid euphemisms. Others, I am happy to note, have also begun unashamedly to do the same.

There was a related reluctance a few decades ago to reintroduce another besmirched word—capitalism—into respectable discourse: even the most ardent defenders of the system that dared not speak its name wasted a lot of energy searching for circumlocutions like "the free market" or "the market economy." But once the reluctance was overcome, the clouds of conceptual obfuscation were dissipated to the point where capitalism could proudly proclaim its identity, and the way was then opened more fully to fruitful changes in policy.

Let me stress again that the American imperialism I consider necessary would be more benign than the 19th-century variety. (So, for that matter, is contemporary capitalism.) Even taking into account the cautionary reservations and qualifications offered by Herb Greer, the concluding paragraph about Bangladesh in Vijay Dandapani's letter indicates that there is no solid reason why we cannot do in the Muslim world what we did in Germany and Japan after World War II.

In contrast to the empires of the past, we would have no wish to stay indefinitely and dominate the countries involved. Rather, we would dedicate ourselves to helping create the conditions that would lead to more and more freedom and more and more prosperity; only when the process was well launched would we go home—a home that would be safer and more secure from terrorist assault and weapons of mass destruction. If ever there was a case of benevolence coinciding with self-interest, this is it.

The question of Islam is even more delicate than the question of imperialism. Mr. Woolsey correctly tells us that there are "many hundreds of millions of decent and reasonable Muslims" with whom we must make common cause. Yes, but the problem is that they have become a truly silent—or is it silenced?—majority. As such, they have been unable or unwilling to make their voices heard above the din of the Islamic clerics who incessantly preach jihad, or holy war, against us and everything we stand for, both real and imagined.

These clerics, moreover, enjoy the backing, both financial and ideological, of the regimes that Mr. Woolsey, also correctly, characterizes as fascist and secularist. (As I said in my article, though, the secularist tyrants never hesitate to play the religious card when it suits them. To cite an especially grisly example I owe to Jeffrey Goldberg's *New Yorker* piece, Saddam's 1988 campaign of chemical war-

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fare against the Kurds in his own country was even named after a chapter in the Koran.) Clerics with an identical theological perspective are financed by our supposed allies, Egypt and especially Saudi Arabia, and are on the payroll of the Palestinian Authority under Yasir Arafat.

I must confess here, as I did in my article, that I have serious doubts about whether these clerics have "hijacked" Islam and distorted it. If that were so, there would be more Muslim authorities to protest and offer resistance by preaching, say, against suicide bombing as a violation of Islamic law. Yet only a very tiny number have dared to declare any such thing, and those few have been stigmatized by their fellow clerics and theologians as blasphemers and apostates.

What this suggests is not that Islam has been "hijacked," but that it has never undergone the kind of modernizing reform to which the other two monotheistic religions, Judaism and Christianity, were subjected in the past few centuries.

How, then, do we make common cause with the many millions of "decent and reasonable Muslims" who unquestionably exist? The first step is to liberate them from the thugs and despots who tyrannize over them, and to encourage the development of decent political systems in which a process of reform and modernization could begin within Islam itself. I for one am persuaded (and I am heartened in this by Gene Nouhan's letter) that if we wage World War IV to a successful conclusion, the setting of just such a process into motion would be one of the fruits of our victory.

In blaming the American public as well as the last several administrations for tolerating terrorism, Bruce Brager echoes a statement I quoted in my article. The statement came from Michael A. Sheehan, who was Bill Clinton's last assistant secretary of state for counterterrorism: "[I]t was the collective judgment of the American people, not just the Clinton administration, that the impact of terrorism was at a level that was acceptable." (Edward T. Oakes's speculations about the lack of outrage are worth pondering in this connection, as are Allen Weingarten's fears of a relapse into our old habits and a loss of resolve.) But presumably we pay our leaders to do more than slavishly follow what the polls tell them. At any rate, we can infer from Osama bin Laden's own statements that the attacks on September 11 would never have been launched if not for the failure of one administration after another to take action against earlier terrorist attacks.

So far as the record of these administration goes, Steven Fantina is perhaps disproportionately hard on Clinton (I myself think Carter was worse), while Serge Farcasan is commensurately a little too easy on Reagan. Still, I would acknowledge that both Mr. Fantina and Mr. Farcasan have a case. On the other hand, I think Mr. Farcasan has less of a case on the coalition strategy of the younger George Bush. While the assembling of that coalition did not ultimately weaken the action in Afghanistan, it did—contrary to Mr. Farcasan's assertion—delay us for several weeks.

But the coalition strategy has dragged us into even greater dangers. At an early stage in the transformation wrought in him by September 11, the President achieved a veritably incandescent clarity about terrorism that, among many other things, illuminated the moral—and military—similarity between Israel's predicament and our own. Then, in March, the vain and demeaning effort to get Arab acquiescence in the coming war against Saddam Hussein caused the light to start flickering and almost to go out altogether.

George F. Will captured the change with eloquent precision. In a column published just as the administration was putting enormous—but ultimately unsuccessful—pressure on Israel to allow Arafat to attend the Arab League summit in Beirut convened to discuss the fraudulent Saudi "vision of peace," Will wrote: "The President says regimes that harbor terrorists are as culpable as the terrorists themselves. Yet although Israel has acted against the Palestinian Authority regime, the source of daily terrorism, less aggressively than America has acted against the Afghanistan regime that was complicit in one day of terrorism, the President has said Israel's self-defense is 'not helpful.'"

The President got back on track after the series of suicide bombings in March—the most horrendous of which was the "Passover massacre"—and the subsequent actions initially taken by Israeli forces to root out the terrorist infrastructure in Arafat's compound in Ramallah and elsewhere. Reversing himself one more time, Bush dropped his reproaches of Sharon, and expressed his understanding of Sharon's actions in defense of Israel's security. Most importantly of all, the President shifted the focus back to terrorism as the cause of the violence.

Yet even then the coalition strategy prevented him from recapturing complete clarity. As of the end of March, Bush still felt compelled to call for "a united front" in the region against terrorism. Behind this call lay the pernicious delusion that Arafat himself, not to mention the Saudis, who have been inciting and harboring and financing suicide bombing all along, were actually opposed to it and other forms of terrorism, and wanted nothing so much as to make peace with Israel. He even seemed to suggest that the Iranians and the Syrians, the two regional members of his "axis of evil," might be willing "to step up and stop sponsoring terrorism."

"Unilateralism" may have been turned into another dirty word. But better for the United States to go it alone under the guidance of its former clarity, and the honor and courage it breeds, than to fall into such confusion and incoherence.

As a friend of Israel, I tremble for the harm that may come to it through this delusion. But as an American who believes with all his heart in the necessity of waging World War IV, and in the justice of our cause, I am also worried about the moral and intellectual damage being done to that cause by the same refusal to face the truth.

Furthermore, I am out-

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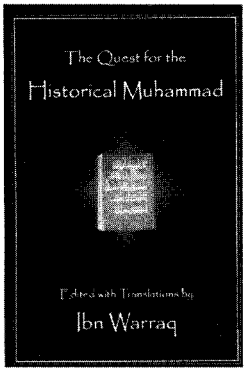

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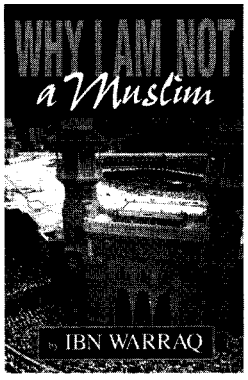

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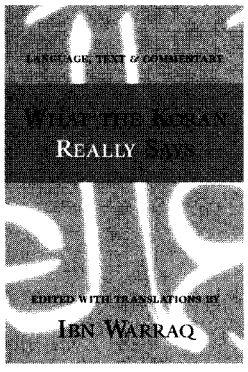

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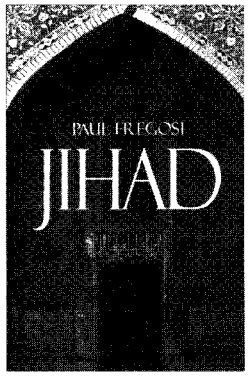

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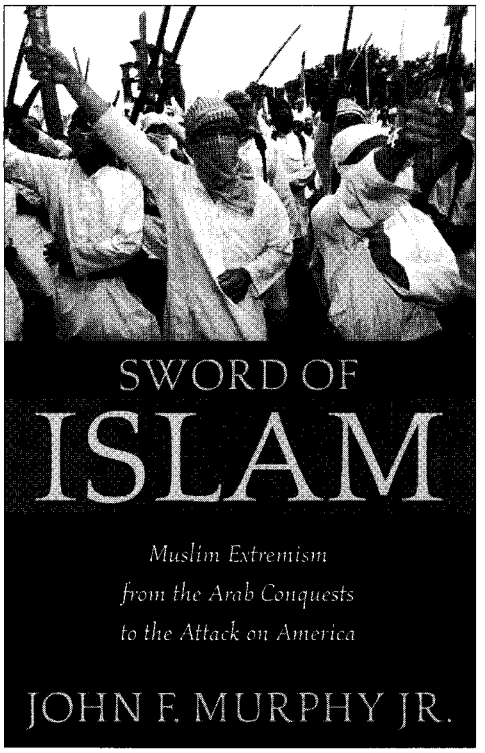

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raged by the humiliation inflicted upon our Vice President by a bunch of petty fascist tyrants in his quest for their approval of the military action we wish to take against Iraq. His mission was rewarded by a series of hectoring lectures about the evils of Israel, and a literal exchange of kisses between the Iraqis and the representatives both of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait at the Arab League summit.

One can only hope and pray that all this represented "a bad patch" for Bush (as Robert L. Bartley of the *Wall Street Journal* called it), and that he will remain back on track in spite of the efforts reportedly being made by some of his advisers to derail him from the course he so bravely set before.

I am with Vijay Dandapani all the way on Saudi Arabia (indeed, I would go even further and include Egypt). But to me it seems that Pakistan—with all its sins on its head—has under Musharraf thus far proved itself a very useful ally. Whether this will last remains to be seen.

I also go all the way with Morton A. Klein on Abu Abbas (who, according to Jeffrey Goldberg, is now in Baghdad). But I am a little bewildered by Daniel R. Foley's letter taking me to task for not connecting the attacks of September 11 with American support of Israel. Perhaps I should have discussed this issue in detail, as I did in an article for the *Wall Street Journal* on September 20, 2001 (www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=95001175). There I pointed out—in common with other commentators—that Osama bin Laden himself had emphasized the presence of American troops on Saudi soil as his main grievance against us, with only perfunctory mention of our support of Israel. After September 11, noticing that many in this country assumed that we were in effect being punished on account of Israel, bin Laden was perfectly happy to pocket this loose change (as Henry Kissinger might put it), and to spend it for propaganda purposes.

It was because I mistakenly imagined that everyone knew all this by the time I wrote "How to Win World War IV" that I omitted expatiating on it there. Mr. Foley is free to regard that omission as a "denial of reality," but his charge of "arrogance" is both puzzling and wrong. On the other hand, I sadly acknowledge that in falling into the cunning trap laid by the Saudi "peace" initiative, and permitting the Arabs to change the subject from Iraq to Israel, the Bush administration gave greater credence to those who, like Mr. Foley, mistakenly imagined from the first that Israel was the nub of our own problem with Islamic terrorism.

For the rest, having already expressed my gratitude to R. James Woolsey in particular, I want to extend it to all the other generous comments that are sprinkled through the letters above.

Death with Dignity?

TO THE EDITOR:

Nelson Lund would apparently rather appease assisted suicide than defeat it ["Why Ashcroft is Wrong on Assisted Suicide," February]. Not only does he, in effect, praise assisted suicide with faint damnation, but he goes so far as to state that in some cases medicalized killing is preferable to deaths that result from patients refusing medical treatment. This is hardly a sturdy foundation from which to struggle against what I called, in the title of my recent book, "the culture of death."

Beyond that, Mr. Lund is simply wrong when he accuses Attorney General John Ashcroft of a failure to respect federalism. To the contrary, it is Oregon that is overstepping its bounds by seeking to nullify federal oversight of what constitutes proper medical practice under the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). That was precisely the issue before the Supreme Court when it ruled (in *United States* v. *Oakland Cannabis Buyers' Cooperative*, 2001) that while California was free to legalize medical marijuana, the state's decision did not in any way prevent the federal government from enforcing federal law.

If federal law is not nullified by medical-marijuana laws—which, after all, only seek to permit the use of cannabis to make patients more comfortable—then the courts surely should not prohibit the federal government from enforcing the CSA against doctors who abuse their prescribing privileges by intentionally helping to kill patients. To rule otherwise would not only be nonsensical in terms of priorities, but would lead to the utter breakdown of the federal regulatory system that governs narcotics.

Consider the possibilities: what if another eight states legalized assisted suicide? In that event, the federal rules would apply in 41 states, the state rules in nine. Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration would begin to need a scorecard! Suppose that sixteen states decided to legalize morphine for the relief of common stress rather than for the limited purposes now permitted by federal law. Or suppose that twenty states decided that controlled substances should be available over-the-counter instead of by prescription. If Mr. Lund is right, these decisions should also be respected by the federal government. The result would be chaos.

Federalism is a two-way street. If the courts rule that a state can prevent the Attorney General from enforcing federal law based on federal standards, the country's very cohesion is at risk. Such a decision would soon be applied, by analogy, to other areas of state-federal conflict, and we would be well on our way back to the weak national government embodied by the Articles of Confederation.

WESLEY J. SMITH
Oakland, California

TO THE EDITOR:

Nelson Lund so clearly articulates the reasons why assisted suicide is morally offensive that his willingness to defend Oregon's right to sanction this crime under the doctrine of federalism is most surprising. One hopes that a civilized society will always strive to protect the lives of its members, especially the most vulnerable. Should that not be a sufficient rationale to override questions of jurisdictional propriety?

Mr. Lund is smart enough to recognize that "everybody can genuflect to federalism as a matter of general prin-

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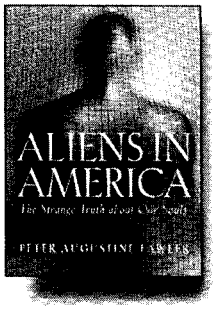

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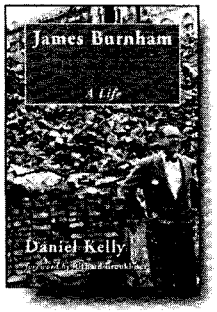

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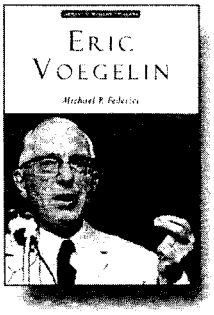

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ciple without thereby committing himself to much of anything as a practical matter." Indeed, this is the very tactic that defenders of Oregon's policy engaged in for two years to thwart congressional efforts to overrule the state. At the urging of a broad coalition opposed to assisted suicide—including the American Medical Association, the Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations—the U.S. House of Representatives twice passed the "Pain Relief Promotion Act" with bipartisan support. But Oregon's Democratic Senator, Ron Wyden, used every point of procedure and personal prerogative to prevent the bill from coming to the Senate floor. He argued that, despite his "personal opposition" to his state's policy, Oregon was entitled, under federalism, to make the decision for itself. The absence of any explicit congressional disapproval of Oregon's law—upon which Mr. Lund relies to make his case—is thus due less to what Congress thinks about assisted suicide than to Senator Wyden's determined opposition.

Mr. Lund asserts that there are "benefits" to allowing the states to deal with "local concerns." But assisted suicide seems sufficiently different from trash collection to warrant national intervention.

NATHAN J. DIAMENT
Institute for Public Affairs
Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR:

Nelson Lund's effort to justify Oregon's "experiment" with assisted suicide sends chills down my spine. He trivializes this grave moral problem by dismissing it as something visited on the residents of Oregon alone, and he ignores one of history's lessons from the Nazis, who manipulated their legal system to justify euthanasia of the mentally retarded and physically handicapped. Societies decay when morality and common sense are subjugated to such legalistic sophistry.

DANIEL J. BROWN
Del Mar, California

TO THE EDITOR:

In discussing assisted suicide as a policy (as opposed to a legal matter), Nelson Lund claims that the Dutch experience "shows that the slippery slope to euthanasia is no mere bugaboo." He cites the frightening figure that "almost 1 percent of all deaths in the Netherlands result from euthanasia performed without the patient's consent." But any slippery-slope argument requires data at *two* points in time. The Dutch, as it turns out, conducted identical surveys on assisted suicide in 1990 and 1995. So how far down the slippery slope have they descended?

In those five years, physician-assisted suicide at the explicit request of patients did increase from 2.1 to 2.7 percent of all deaths in the Netherlands. Yet—and this is the key comparison—the *volume* of explicit requests for assisted suicide went up still faster in that period, by 9 percent (from 8,900 to 9,700). In other words, despite a higher rate of assisted suicides, doctors were *less* likely to accept their patients' requests for assistance in bringing their lives to an end. As for assisted suicides *without* consent—which includes many newborns with no chance of life—the figure was .8 percent of all deaths in the Netherlands in 1990 and .7 percent in 1995.

All this means there is no simple answer to whether, in Mr. Lund's words, we "should go down this road."

EDWARD GROSS
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

NELSON LUND writes:

Wesley J. Smith, Nathan J. Diament, and Daniel J. Brown all believe that it is more important to stop assisted suicide than it is to respect the Oregon electorate's decision to allow the practice. Although I disagree with them on the grounds I set out at length in my article, a perfectly reasonable person could share their judgment. Disappointingly, however, they do not advance reasonable arguments in support of their position.

Mr. Smith is a distinguished defender of traditional medical ethics, whose work on assisted suicide and related topics has greatly enriched the public debate. But his letter here is more akin to what one might hear from a partisan spin-doctor. First, he misrepresents what I said. Contrary to Mr. Smith's allegation, my article did not "state that in some cases medicalized killing is preferable to deaths that result from patients *refusing* medical treatment" (emphasis added). What I *did* say was very different: that medicalized killing might sometimes be preferable to deaths that result from the practice of *denying* patients such "treatment" as food and water. I stand by this view.

Next, Mr. Smith mischaracterizes the Supreme Court's decision in *Oakland Cannabis Buyers' Cooperative*. As the Court explained at the outset of its opinion, the issue in that case was whether a federal statute contains an implicit "medical necessity" exception to the statute's express rule against distributing marijuana. I argued that the Oregon case is different because the statute contains no express (or even clearly implied) rule against using prescription drugs for physician-assisted suicide. Mr. Smith misrepresents what the Court said, and ignores what I argued.

Finally, Mr. Smith predicts that if individual states are permitted to experiment with the rules applying to physicians' use of prescription drugs, we will witness the "utter breakdown" of the federal regulatory system, which will put "the country's very cohesion at risk." This kind of hysterical rhetoric is always provoked by Supreme Court decisions holding that some regulatory function is beyond the constitutional powers of the federal government, and is thus reserved to the states. Such hyperbole is inappropriate in that context, but it is quite bizarre to encounter it here, when Congress itself has not seen fit to enact the uniform national policy that Mr. Smith thinks is the only alternative to "chaos."

Nathan J. Diament appears to believe that it is somehow more significant that the House of Representatives passed a bill that would have overridden Oregon's decision than that the Senate did *not* pass the bill. As every schoolchild learns, our Constitution does not permit a law to be enacted by the unilateral action of one house of Congress. If Mr. Diament is suggesting that this provision of the Consti-

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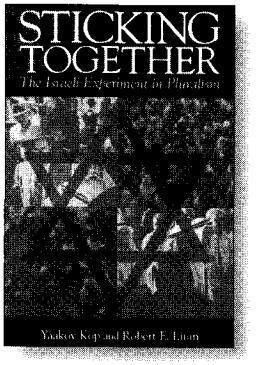
Yaakov Kop is director of the Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel. **Robert E. Litan** is vice president and director of Economic Studies at the Brookings Institution, where he also holds the Cabot Family Chair in Economics.



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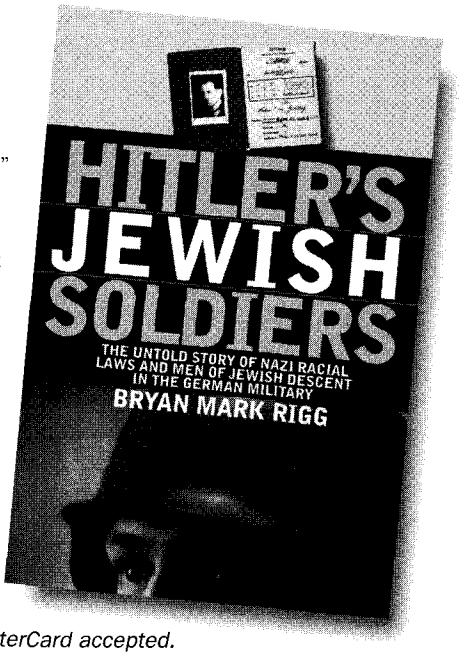
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tution is a trivial matter of "jurisdictional propriety," which should be overridden in the interest of protecting vulnerable patients, he is advocating lawlessness. Similarly, Daniel J. Brown conflates my legal analysis with the "legalistic sophistry" of the Nazis. Rather like Will Roper in *A Man for All Seasons*, Messrs. Diament and Brown apparently would defend the innocent by cutting down the laws that protect us all. There must be a better way.

Attacking me from the other direction, Edward Gross complains that my inference from the Dutch experience is invalid because the rates of physician acquiescence in patient requests for assisted suicide and of euthanasia without the patient's consent (i.e., murder) apparently did not rise between 1990 and 1995. This complaint is misplaced. My claim that legalizing physician-assisted suicide can lead to inappropriate pressure on patients to commit suicide, as well as to murder, might be undermined by statistics showing that these immoral practices were just as common before the Dutch effectively legalized assisted suicide as they are now. But the Dutch experiment began many years before the 1990 survey, so Mr. Gross's statistics are irrelevant.

Whatever "simple answer" Mr. Gross thinks I have proposed, I hope that nobody will be lulled by his statistics into believing that Oregon's experiment with assisted suicide is a matter to be taken lightly. Notwithstanding my disagreement with Attorney General Ashcroft's legal decision, it was certainly appropriate for him to be more concerned than Mr. Gross is with the threat that Oregon's decision poses in a nation dedicated to the proposition that all men—including the very young, the very old, and the very ill—are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights.

Anti-Semitism

TO THE EDITOR:

Israel is morally undermined not by anti-Semites, as Hillel Halkin would have us believe, but by racist Israeli laws, and by those like Mr. Halkin who try to justify the unjustifiable ["The Return of Anti-Semitism," February]. Even though his grandfathers may never have set foot there, any Jew may go to live in Israel; but the Palestinian whose former home still stands there may not return to reclaim it simply because he is not a Jew.

The recent UN conference in Durban, where nongovernmental organizations and human-rights agencies branded Israel a racist state, should have served as a moment of truth for Israel. In modern times, there have been two apartheid regimes: one based on race and the other on religion. The one based on race was defeated because the rest of humanity turned against it. The one based on religion is facing the same prospect.

Israel and its supporters exhort us never to forget what the Jewish people suffered 60 years ago, and at the same time demand that we turn a blind eye when Israel victimizes Palestinians. Mr. Halkin confuses the agitation against this blatant hypocrisy with anti-Semitism.

HASSAN ABDURRAHMAN
Edmonton, Canada

TO THE EDITOR:

Hillel Halkin's equation of criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism cannot be sustained. If Israel violates the standards by which other states are measured, then it deserves the resulting blame. In this regard, his most egregious and revealing claim is that, "There are times when only an anti-Semite can accuse Israel of what it *is* guilty of." This is pure sophistry, and simply adds fuel to the genuine anti-Semitic fire of many misguided individuals and groups.

DAVID E. STEPHENS
Concord, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR:

By Hillel Halkin's standards, I am an anti-Semite. I reject and resent the charge. When I argue that the Israeli government practices racial discrimination against the country's Arab minority in housing, education, and economic policies, I am under no moral obligation to soften the accusation with a blanket endorsement of the state. And when I argue that Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is cruel, stupid, and illegal, I violate no ethical standard by omitting any reference to the government's claims about the right to self-defense.

T. EDWARD RHODES
Venice, Florida

TO THE EDITOR:

Hillel Halkin writes that "the new anti-Israelism is nothing but the old anti-Semitism in disguise." How easily this answers criticism of Israel, a country whose policies often have little to do with its Jewishness. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is a Jew, but his heartless, aggressive actions are those of any ultra-militant soldier.

The impression one receives from Mr. Halkin is that there is an attitude among many—if not most—Jews that they have suffered so much that nothing they do can compare with what has been done to them. This allows Israel to build illegal settlements on Palestinian land and then to blame the Palestinians for causing the resulting conflict.

WILLIAM H. RIDDELL
Tampa, Florida

TO THE EDITOR:

Although I am generally pro-Israel, I object to Hillel Halkin's attempt to equate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism. He is right that Israel is the state of the Jews, but that does not make Israel the equivalent of the Jewish people. An anti-Israel political stance might be naive, misguided, or even dangerous, but it is not necessarily immoral the way racism is. Mr. Halkin should be ashamed for indiscriminately leveling so serious a charge against his political opponents.

PETER A. SPECKHARD
Green Bay, Wisconsin

TO THE EDITOR:

Hillel Halkin overlooks the most rational explanation for the various recent eruptions of anti-Semitism that he documents: self-interest. Consider, for example, the French diplomat's distasteful reference to Israel as "that shitty little country." His disparagement is perfectly understandable, if crudely stated. What, after all, is Israel to the vital interests of France other than a persistent cause of tension with the vast Mus-

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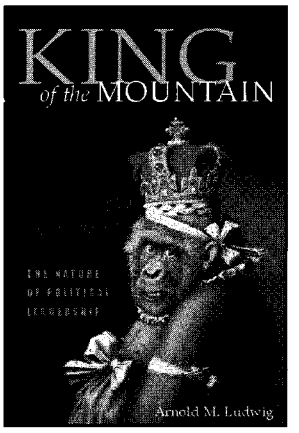

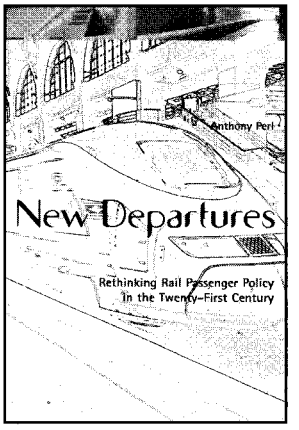

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lim world, to which France is beholden for its oil supply?

We ought not to blame age-old, implacable hatreds for the current surge of anti-Semitism. Though such underlying feelings undoubtedly exist, they are not the overriding cause. If the Israelis were not Jews but Hindus or Mormons causing the same problems, the French diplomat would not have spoken differently.

ARTHUR S. BAY
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

TO THE EDITOR:

Hillel Halkin is undoubtedly correct that many anti-Semites use the Arab-Israeli conflict as an excuse to vent anti-Jewish feelings in a publicly acceptable manner. But there is another dynamic at work here that his analysis points toward but stops short of describing. "Support for Israel," Mr. Halkin writes, "is difficult to justify on cold grounds of national interest." "Such support," he continues, "entails not only large sums of money but also, more than ever since September 11, large perceived risks."

If support of Israel is not in America's perceived national interest, and if such support involves considerable costs to America (in terms of foreign aid, domestic security, and good relations with the Muslim world), then domestic Jewish support for Israel may increasingly be seen as anti-American. Thus, while Mr. Halkin is correct that anti-Israeli feelings can cloak anti-Semitism, it is also true that the pro-Israel disposition of American Jews may intensify American anti-Semitism.

RUSS NIELI
Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR:

In eloquently making the case for Israel, Hillel Halkin claims that the recent surge of anti-Israelism is just the old Jew-hatred in a new guise. But today's anti-Semitism is coming from a different direction from before, and with different consequences.

Mr. Halkin cites survey research showing that most American Jews still agree that anti-Semitism is a "serious problem." This result can be explained, I believe—and Mr. Halkin cites me on this—if we understand that most of these Jews are referring not to the present situation but to their foreboding about the future. According to one survey, while the majority of American Jews were worried about anti-Semitism in the U.S., only a small minority were worried that they would face economic or political discrimination—the traditional expressions of the "old" anti-Semitism. But a large majority felt that anti-Semitism was increasing in the form of "anti-Israel sentiment." This seems to jibe with Mr. Halkin's proposition that hostility to Israel and to Jews in general are now virtually indistinguishable. But it also suggests that the new surge of anti-Semitism *is* a new form of anti-Semitism.

The difference, I think, is that after all these centuries, the torch of anti-Semitism has moved largely from Christianity to Islam. Since World War II, the creation of Israel, and the stunning Arab defeat of 1948, the Arab Muslim world as a whole has become infected by the traditional anti-Semitism of Christian Europe. With the recent growth of radical Islam, this variety of anti-Semitism has now become a global ideological force. In Europe, most anti-Semitic acts are now committed by Muslims reacting to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This new source of anti-Semitism may be just as deadly as the old one, but the differences between the two are not insignificant. The Islamists direct their most active rage at the West—particularly America—for keeping the "secularist" Arab regimes in power and defiling Islam. They hate Israel because they see Jews as the West's surrogates.

Since anti-Americanism and even anti-Christianity lie at its center, this form of anti-Semitism is not likely to sweep the American masses off their feet. Indeed, despite the growth of this ideology, old-fashioned anti-Semitism has continued to fade in this country, and support for Israel has risen.

It is not yet time for American Jews to abandon their worries. But if anti-Semitism revives in the U.S.—and even if it involves a backlash against Israel—it will be of the old European-Christian variety, which is immiscible with the new Islamist kind. Both are abhorrent, but they require different remedies. Simply fusing anti-Semitism with anti-Israelism, as Mr. Halkin does, will not advance the strategic battle against either.

EARL RAAB
San Francisco, California

TO THE EDITOR:

How is it that Hillel Halkin, one of the smartest people in Israel, can write of the "return" of anti-Semitism without once mentioning the Israeli ingredient in the unwholesome stew he so shrewdly analyzes? "When it comes to defaming Jews," says a character in Philip Roth's *Operation Shylock*, "the Palestinians are *pisherkehs* next to [the Israeli newspaper] *Ha'aretz*." Can Mr. Halkin think of any Arab atrocity that the typical Israeli leftist would not justify by pointing to "the occupation"?

What is crucial is not merely the existence of anti-Semitism in Israel—everyone understands that anti-Semitism is not a genetic affliction confined to non-Jews—but also its tremendous export value. Back in 1987, the Israeli cartoonist Dosh drew a picture of a shopper in a European supermarket specializing in anti-Semitic merchandise reaching for an expensive package on the top shelf. The box was adorned by a Nazi-style caricature of a Jew and prominently labeled "Made in Israel." Dosh's point: discriminating shoppers, tired of grade-B merchandise from British leftists and French neo-Nazis, wanted authentic material from local sources, and Israeli artists and intellectuals were responding with alacrity. Today, they still are—and business is booming.

EDWARD ALEXANDER
Seattle, Washington

TO THE EDITOR:

Hillel Halkin is right to see anti-Semitism in a Belgian court's decision to prosecute Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for the Sabra and Shatila massacres, while declining to take similar action against Dutch NATO troops who failed to prevent Serbs from killing thousands of Muslims in Srebrenica.

But this instance of anti-Semitism becomes even

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What are the facts?

A history of terror: Arab-Muslim terror in Israel has been going on for a very long time. Pogroms have been perpetrated on the Jewish population for almost 100 years, one of the most egregious being the carnage in Hebron in 1929, in which the Arabs killed 129 Jews and grievously wounded and maimed 399, many of them women and children. The current outrages have acquired new bloody dimensions because of the introduction of the "suicide martyrs" and because of the weapons that the Palestinians have been able to smuggle into their territory and those that the Israelis have foolishly provided to them.

Our country has risen in justified outrage and has gone to war to pursue those who have inflicted 4,000 casualties on us. Israel has one-fiftieth of the population of the United States. The about 500 Jews who have been killed by the Palestinians in the past eighteen months corresponds to about 25,000 killed in the United States. Would the American people stand still for that? Of course not! How much forbearance does the world expect before Israel lashes out and inflicts terrible punishment on its tormentors?

These are the same people who have blown up the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, the Jewish Community Center in the same city, and the Israeli Embassy in London. Hundreds of people were killed. There can be no question that they were also behind the PanAm flight 103 plane explosion which killed 270 people, mostly Americans; that they were responsible for the blowing up of the Air Force barracks in Saudi Arabia, in which 19 Air Force personnel died; and in literally hundreds of other acts of terror. All of these terror acts are specifically authorized by Yassir Arafat. That is a man who until not too long ago was classified as an international terrorist by the U.S. State Department. That he has received the Nobel Peace Price must be considered a cosmic joke.

> " Israel should respond harshly to any further provocations and should not enter into any further negotiations with the Palestine Authority and with Yassir Arafat – a blood-stained terrorist. "

Any pretext suffices. The basic understanding with Arafat and his Palestinian Arabs was that terror and mayhem would stop after the signing of the Oslo Agreement. That has not happened. On the contrary, more Jews have been killed by terror attacks since the famous handshake between the late Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin and Yassir Arafat than in any comparable period before it. Arafat and the "Palestinian Authority" do nothing to stop this slaughter; on the contrary, they actively encourage their followers to use violence to accomplish their ends. In blood-curdling speeches, Arafat and his henchman goad their followers into violence, urging them to "liberate Palestine by jihad (holy war) with blood and with fire."

The current rampage was supposedly triggered by Mr. Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount. And why shouldn't he visit the Temple Mount? It's in Israel,isn't it? The Arabs-Muslims can visit any place in Israel, without anybody standing in their way. Were it not for that freedom, there would be no suicide bombers. The dreadful acts of slaughter are committed because of the undying hatred of the Jews, a hatred that permeates the Muslim world. The purpose is to kill and maim as many Jews as possible.

And that is the nub of the problem. Only the most naïve can any longer believe that the Palestinian Arabs (or the rest of the Arab-Muslim world) can be placated by the Israelis bringing further "sacrifices for peace." The Arabs will not be satisfied with any piece of land. Even if the Israeli Jews were prepared to hand over the entire land of Israel to the Arabs and only retain perhaps, the enclave of Tel Aviv, it would not suffice. The elimination of any Jewish vestige is the inalterable goal.

The presence of Jews in the Middle East is an unacceptable thorn in the side of the Arabs – an insult that must be avenged and eliminated. But, of course, no peace can come about until that attitude and mindset change. And that may take a very long time.

Regardless of what other proposals may be put on the table by well-meaning (and sometimes not so well-meaning) third parties, the Palestinians having their own governance and living side by side with Israel in harmony and co-prosperity is simply not possible at the present time. Former prime minister Ehud Barak, under the insistent pressure of former president Clinton, offered breathtaking concessions to the Palestinians, concessions that would have fulfilled virtually all of their stated aspirations, including even the de facto partition of Jerusalem. But Mr. Arafat haughtily rejected them and unleashed his bloody intifada instead. Israel should respond harshly to any further provocations and should not enter into any further negotiations with the Palestine Authority and with Yassir Arafat, because he is not a nation builder but a blood-stained terrorist, the perfect counterpart to Osama bin Laden. Nobody, not the United States, nor any other country, nor the United Nations should be the arbiter of Israel's destiny. Only Israel should determine whether its national rights and its security requirements are being honored and fulfilled. Only then, and not before, should Israel be prepared to continue any negotiations with the Palestinian Arabs and, hopefully, not with Arafat, but with a more enlightened successor.

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more obvious when one considers that the Belgians never even weighed prosecuting the actual perpetrator of the September 1982 massacre in Lebanon: Elias Khobeika, the commander of the Phalange militia who personally supervised the slaughter. Until his recent assassination, Khobeika was a prominent political figure in Lebanon, serving in parliament and as a minister, and even running for president. Through it all, it never occurred to anyone in Belgium to bring charges against him for actions he readily acknowledged. A justice system that behaves in this way indicts none but itself.

URI KAUFMAN
New York City

TO THE EDITOR:

The return of anti-Semitism, as described by Hillel Halkin, is certainly disgusting, but perhaps it is less threatening than he suggests. For the past several decades, anti-Semitism in the West has been a marker of low social status, political frustration, and intellectual disarray. Its adherents have been particularly disreputable in the United States, but they have been marginal even in Western Europe.

The current anti-Israel manifestations of anti-Semitism follow the same pattern. The difference is that this form of anti-Semitism is expressed by people who used to have prestige and influence but who are now losing their status: European and American academics, journalists, and transnational bureaucrats. This ex-elite cannot pretend to run the world anymore, and its members no longer receive automatic deference. Their resentment is conspicuous. It is not surprising that, like other losers, they would blame the Jews. They are in good company with their Arab allies, who similarly once assumed that history was on their side.

MARK MITTLEMAN
St. Louis, Missouri

TO THE EDITOR:

I am grateful to Hillel Halkin for "The Return of Anti-Semitism." For the phenomenon he describes, however, it would be better not to use a word crafted to advance the cause of those who hate Jews.

The term "anti-Semitism" was coined in the 1890's by a Jew-hating German politician and crackpot racial theorist, Wilhelm Marr, who calculated that the euphemism would be more congenial to delicate bourgeois sensibilities than its antecedent, *Judenhass*, or Jew-hatred, which so baldly proclaimed an unreasoning, murderous hostility. Events soon proved, of course, that while "anti-Semites" might have lacked the virtue of honest self-description that Jew-haters could boast of, their purpose was the same.

By devising a word intended to condition people to think of Jews as racially distinct, Marr contributed to the process of converting Christendom's age-old antipathy toward those who had "rejected Christ" into the 20th-century passion to purge Europe of a supposedly alien "race." Marr's "modern," "scientific" term was simply perfumed cover for the desire to extirpate Jews.

A nonsensical word with such a pedigree and purpose should be consigned to the dung-heap from which it sprang. There are no anti-Semites, only Jew-haters.

MAYNARD F. THOMPSON
Cleveland, Ohio

HILLEL HALKIN writes:

It is always frustrating for a writer when some of his readers do not know how to read. I explicitly stated in my article that I do *not* regard criticism of Israel as automatically anti-Semitic and that everyone—including Hassan Abdurrahman, David E. Stephens, T. Edward Rhodes, William H. Riddell, Peter A. Speckhard, and Arthur S. Bay—has a perfect right to criticize Israel without being accused of prejudice *on the condition that his criticisms do not reflect a double standard*.

Thus, if Mr. Abdurrahman will send me copies of the angry letters he has written to protest the religiously discriminatory adoption of Islamic law by the governments of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Iran, and many other Muslim countries; if Mr. Stephens will provide me with a list of the "other states" against which he proposes to measure Israel; if Mr. Rhodes will give me a token of his past concern over "racial discrimination . . . in housing, education, and economic policies" by the Czech, Romanian, and Hungarian governments against their Gypsy minorities, by the Lithuanian and Latvian governments against their Russian minorities, by the Moroccan and Algerian governments against their Berber minorities, by the Thai government against its Burmese minority, or similar cases; if Mr. Riddell will publicly proclaim that the Palestinians' past suffering at the hands of Israel does not justify violence against Israelis; if Mr. Speckhard will assure me that a consistently anti-African political stance does not mean one is prejudiced against blacks; and if Mr. Bay will explain why, although the continued Indian occupation of Kashmir could lead to war between nuclear powers, French diplomats do not feel sufficiently threatened by it to call India nasty names, then I will gladly exonerate each and every one of these gentlemen of the slightest suspicion of prejudice in their criticisms of Israel.

Russ Nieli may be right in saying that, should anti-Israel sentiment in America increase, "the pro-Israel disposition of American Jews may intensify American anti-Semitism." This is why Earl Raab may be wrong. But to be honest, my concern is not, as I wrote in my article, for American Jews. I do not think they are in any danger. Israel is. Anti-Semitism in the world today is directed largely against it. The relevant question for American Jews is not so much whether they will encounter serious anti-Semitism in the U.S. as whether they will be deterred by the fear of it, or by growing criticism of Israel, from persisting in their traditionally strong support for the Jewish state.

The Jewish self-denigration of part of the Israeli Left is something that exists, and it was for reasons of space rather than of principle that I did not touch on it or on the question of Jewish self-blame in general. But Edward Alexander should keep in mind that here, too, we are dealing with a two-way street: just as anti-Semitism in the world thrives on the "testimony" of self-blaming

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Jews, so Jewish and Israeli self-blame is exacerbated when anti-Semitism thrives in the world.

Uri Kaufman is absolutely correct. The whole story of Elias Khobeika, both in terms of Belgian justice, which was reportedly considering offering him impunity as a state witness to testify against Ariel Sharon, and in terms of an Arab world that never lifted a finger to punish him for the 1982 massacre, is a scandal. The fact that Khobeika remained a free and prominent figure in Syrian-controlled Lebanon for twenty years after Sabra and Shatila shows how hypocritical the Arabs were and continue to be in their condemnation of Israel for what happened there.

I wish I were as sure as Mark Mittleman that the "academics, journalists, and transnational bureaucrats" who are leading the current intellectual offensive against Israel represent an "ex-elite now losing their status." I would be interested in knowing what this analysis is based on.

Finally, although I agree with Maynard Thompson that "anti-Semitism" is an unfortunate term, it is one, I am afraid, that we are stuck with. I would not advise wasting our energies on combating it rather than the phenomenon it refers to.

Intellectuals

To the Editor:

Gertrude Himmelfarb's discussion of my book, *Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline*, is intelligent, responsible, and very interesting ["Judging Richard Posner," February]. Though there is much in it with which I disagree, there is only one point on which immediate correction seems required. It is her statement that I argued in an earlier book "for the selling of infants (though not older children) to pedophiles." I have never argued for such a thing. What *is* true is that I have long been critical of the way in which we regulate the adoption market, and I have suggested that adoption agencies therefore be permitted to experiment with offering a woman contemplating an abortion a fee to carry the fetus to term and put the child up for adoption.

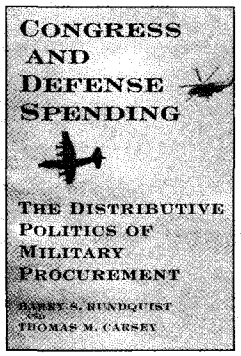
A natural objection is that someone might want to adopt ("buy") a child for improper purposes. To that my reply is that one's legal duties to a child are independent of how the child was obtained—whether naturally, through adoption, or (for that matter) by theft. But as an additional safeguard I suggested that no sale of parental rights over non-infants be permitted. The danger that pedophiles, who rarely have a sexual interest in newborn infants, would attempt to obtain parental rights over an infant for purposes of abusing it when it is older seems slight. In any event, the method of adoption would not license the adopter to engage in criminal activity against the adopted child.

Richard A. Posner
Chicago, Illinois

To the Editor:

Gertrude Himmelfarb writes that Richard A. Posner "criticizes 'academic moralists' who torment themselves with questions of ethics and justice." But Ronald

OKLAHOMA


CONGRESS AND DEFENSE SPENDING
THE DISTRIBUTIVE POLITICS OF MILITARY PROCUREMENT
BARRY S. RUNDQUIST AND THOMAS M. CARSEY

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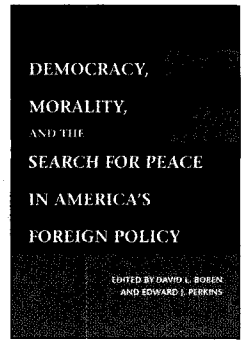

DEMOCRACY, MORALITY, AND THE SEARCH FOR PEACE IN AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY
Edited by David L. Boren and Edward J. Perkins

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Dworkin and other moral philosophers whom Posner criticizes are not "tormented"; they are complacent and arrogant. Rather than struggle with moral issues, they attempt to prove that the only valid position on questions like abortion just happens to coincide with the left-liberal views they espouse. Posner does not think that philosophy is the source of morality, and convincingly argues that what the academic moral philosophers do is not useful, particularly to judges.

Richard Posner is a free-thinker and moral relativist, but not, as Gertrude Himmelfarb suggests, a vulgar or extreme one. I do not see him as someone who rejects the prevailing moral views of our society.

JON JEWETT
Richmond, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR:

Near the conclusion of her masterful and totally convincing critique, Gertrude Himmelfarb politely refers to Richard Posner as "one of our most distinguished public intellectuals." Distinguished? She has just skinned him alive. As she demonstrates, Posner is an extreme moral relativist who has neither internal compass nor external mooring. By asserting the unreality of right or wrong, he sets himself up as the judge of what is right and wrong. Like Lucifer in *Paradise Lost*, has he not committed the ultimate sin of pride and hubris?

ERNEST W. LEFEVER
Ethics and Public Policy Center
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR:

Gertrude Himmelfarb justifiably takes Richard Posner to task for, among other things, portraying Lionel Trilling as a critic torn between "the moralist and aesthetic camps," when Trilling is more accurately described, in her words, as "the prototype of the moral critic." She goes too far, however, in asserting that Trilling "coined the term 'moral imagination.'"

The phrase occurs in a famous passage of Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Lamenting the ill treatment of Marie Antoinette, Burke comments that "the age of chivalry" has been replaced by a time of "sophisters, economists, and calculators." Now, Burke fears,

> All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the super-added ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion.

Trilling might have run across the phrase either here or in Irving Babbitt's *Democracy and Leadership* (1924), the third chapter of which is titled "Burke and the Moral Imagination."

JAMES SEATON
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan

GERTRUDE HIMMELFARB writes:

I thank Richard A. Posner for his gracious remarks about my essay. His demurral, however, to my statement about "the selling of infants (though not older children) to pedophiles" is not persuasive. He says that he never argued for such a thing. But he *did* argue, and not so long ago, and not casually or facetiously (in *Sex and Reason*, 1992), for baby-selling, which he renamed "the sale of parental rights." He qualified this only by prohibiting the sale of non-infants so as to prevent them from being used by pedophiles. The sale of infants should be permitted, he wrote, because "very few child abusers have a sexual interest in infants; very few would acquire an infant for the purpose of being able to abuse it five or ten or fifteen years later." I think my statement, therefore, is entirely accurate.

I agree with Jon Jewett (and with Judge Posner) that many "academic moralists" are "complacent and arrogant" in their reflexively "left-liberal" views. But this does not mean, as Judge Posner and evidently Mr. Jewett think, that philosophers, academic or not, have nothing to say on the subject of morality. On the contrary, morality has had pride of place in philosophy. Else we would have to rule out the profession of Plato and Aristotle, Kant and Hegel. As for the claim that Judge Posner is in accord with "the prevailing moral views of our society," I do not think he himself thinks that. My impression is that Judge Posner regards himself as a maverick, a brave soul defying conventional opinion. Does "our society" believe, as he does, that it is only our "local standards" that deem the Holocaust, human sacrifice, infanticide, slavery, or—for that matter—baby-selling to be immoral?

I apologize to Ernest Lefever for not making it clear that when I called Judge Posner, toward the end of my critique, "one of our most distinguished public intellectuals," I was being ironic. In fact, I am not sure that, post-Posner, one can call anyone a "public intellectual" without being ironic.

Finally, James Seaton is quite right to take issue with my statement that Lionel Trilling "coined the term 'moral imagination,'" and to remind us of Edmund Burke's use of that phrase. Having quoted Burke to that effect in at least two of my books, where I explicitly related his usage to Trilling's, I am, of course, aware of Burke's priority. In making my point about Trilling, I too hastily used the shorthand "coined." I should have said that Trilling "introduced" that phrase into our vocabulary, for it is he, and not Burke, who made us familiar with it, as a corollary to his "liberal imagination."

Nuclear Terror

TO THE EDITOR:

Gary Milhollin dangerously underestimates the reality of the nuclear threat ["Can Terrorists Get the Bomb?," February]. He states that the amount of uranium required to make a gun-type bomb is 120 pounds. In fact, if you reduce that amount by half, you get a more accurate picture of what is needed for a workable terrorist weapon. Amounts in this range have already come close to reaching the black market, including 40 pounds that a Russian gang attempted to take from a weapons plant in the Urals and 26 pounds seized in

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Europe within the last eight years. We know about these amounts because the culprits were caught. If we extrapolate from these incidents, the chance that there is a workable amount of uranium available for terrorism is not nearly so small as Mr. Milhollin claims.

Mr. Milhollin also contends that the chance that Pakistan would be involved in this effort is "virtually nil." But what of all the Pakistani nuclear engineers? Several have been questioned about their suspected contacts with al Qaeda, and one—Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood, who was responsible for developing Pakistan's first nuclear bomb—met with Osama bin Laden as recently as August 2001.

Even with the necessary raw material and trained personnel, there is of course still the problem of where to house the manufacturing process for a nuclear bomb. But working with uranium, as opposed to plutonium, does not require immense space—just electricity, machinery, and furnaces. If bin Laden can hide himself and his associates, and Saddam Hussein can hide his weapon-building facilities, it seems clear that a location for building a nuclear weapon could be found and maintained.

What of the last problem cited by Mr. Milhollin—transporting the bomb itself? He states that unless the shielding is heavy enough, the person carrying the bomb would be killed by radiation. But it would not take long to carry a suitcase bomb into a mall or an airport, no matter how "hot" it is. To suicidal terrorists, dying is secondary to killing.

JOSEPH G. ROSS
Whitestone, New York

GARY MILHOLLIN writes:

Joseph G. Ross is right to be worried about terrorists acquiring a nuclear weapon, but his letter exhibits some misconceptions. He asserts that a "workable terrorist weapon" could be made with only half of the 120 pounds of highly enriched uranium that I estimated would be needed for a gun-type bomb. I know of no evidence for that claim. He also cites the activities of Pakistani scientist Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood. Whatever Mr. Mahmood might have told his Islamist friends in Afghanistan, there is no evidence that he now has access to Pakistani nuclear weapons or the material to make them—the issue my article discussed.

Finally, Mr. Ross appears to confuse the term "suitcase bomb"—by which one means a real nuclear weapon—with a radiation bomb, which disperses radiological contaminants. It is unlikely that an unshielded suitcase-size radiation bomb could contain enough radioactive material to do much radiological harm.

Correction

In Tamar Jacoby's "Too Many Immigrants?" [April], the initial letters of several words were inadvertently dropped from the paragraph at the bottom of the left-hand column on p. 41. The final two sentences of the paragraph should have read: "It is also true that one small segment of the immigrant population—refugees—tends to be heavily dependent on welfare. As a result, states with large immigrant populations often face chronic fiscal problems." We regret these errors.—ED.

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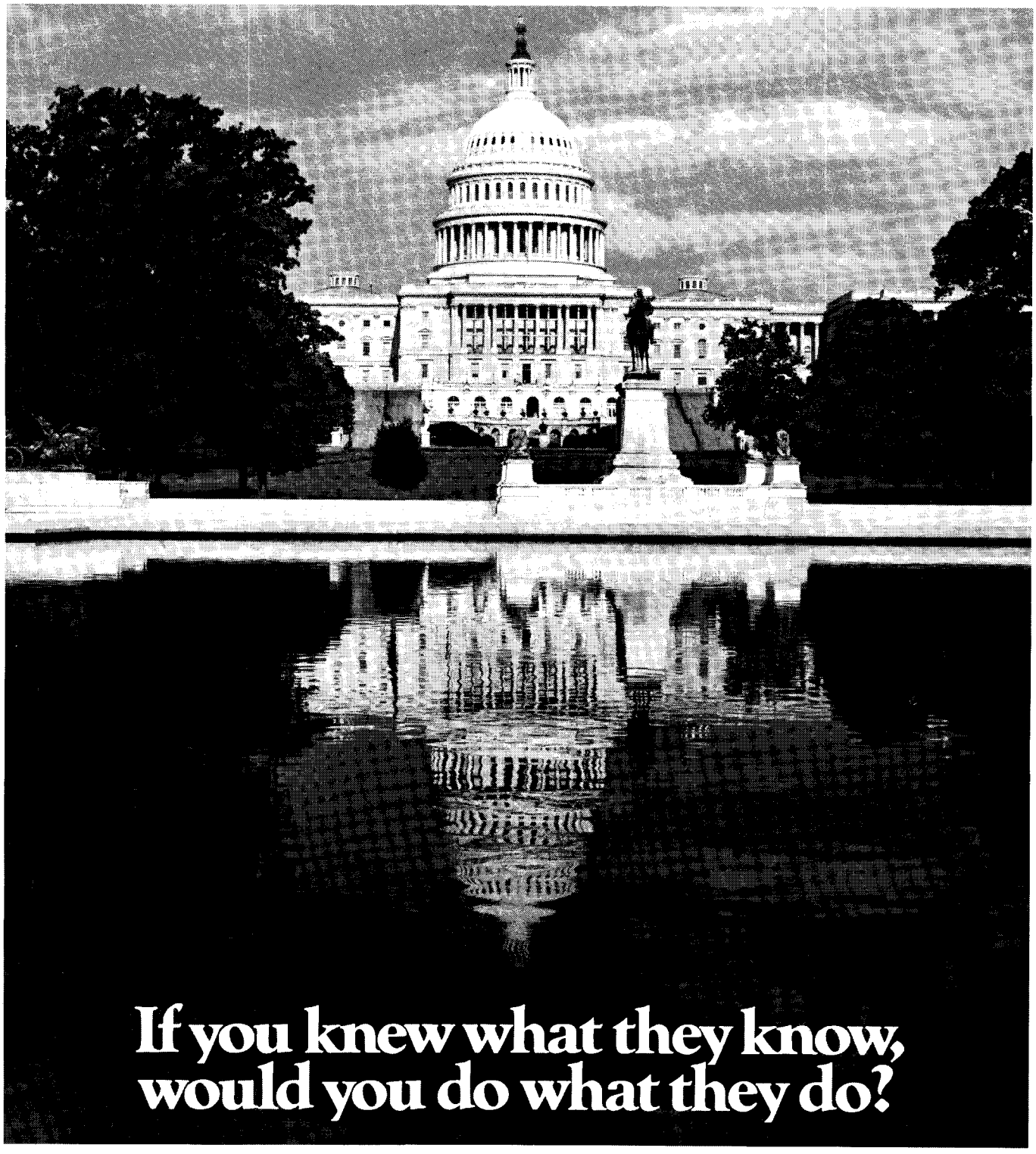

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Commentary
May 2002

Hearts, Minds, and the War Against Terror

Joshua Muravchik

THE SCOOP appeared in the *New York Times* in February: as part of "a new effort to influence public sentiment and policy makers in both friendly and unfriendly countries," it revealed, the Pentagon was "developing plans to provide news items, *possibly even false ones*, to foreign media organizations" (emphasis added).

According to the *Times*, what had prompted the creation of this so-called Office of Strategic Influence (OSI) was the worry of "many administration officials" that "the United States was losing support in the Islamic world after American warplanes began bombing Afghanistan." And what had prompted the leak of the story? It seems that a number of people inside the Pentagon, whether for reasons of principle or for reasons of turf, were concerned that the new office, by combining the tasks of public relations with those of covert operations, would thereby taint the former. "It goes from the blackest of black programs to the whitest of white," an anonymous official was quoted, thus fueling the impression that the office would be peddling lies.

In fact, the U.S. has rarely done anything like this in its history. (The term "black operations" in this context properly refers to the practice of hiding the role of the government as the source of a given story rather than to the practice of spreading disinformation.) Nevertheless, the *Times* weighed in the very next day with an editorial denouncing the new office, which it called "Orwellian," while the columnist Maureen Dowd contributed her own broadside against what she dubbed the Office of Strategic Mendacity. In no time, scores of other newspapers around the country had registered their indignation, causing Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to protest that "the Pentagon is not issuing disinformation to the foreign press or any other press."

But the die had been cast. Within a week of the first *Times* story, Rumsfeld announced he had closed the office down.

THIS ABORTED mission was not the only effort by the Bush administration to wage a battle for hearts and minds as part of its larger war against terrorism. The State Department had already brought in Charlotte Beers, formerly the head of the giant advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather, as undersecretary for "public diplomacy." According to Beers, her aim was to do for the United States what she had done for IBM in the 1990's—namely, to "rebrand" it. But her new job, she confessed, would be even tougher than her old one—indeed, "the most sophisticated brand assignment I have ever had." "It is almost," she added, "as though we have to redefine what America is."

If the goal sounded ambitious, she could at least

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK, *a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of* Exporting Democracy *and, most recently,* Heaven on Earth: The Rise and Fall of Socialism *(Encounter Books).*

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count on the full backing of her formidable patron, the Secretary of State. For Colin Powell himself, it turns out, had been keen on the Madison Avenue approach to public diplomacy even before September 11, much preferring it to the more traditional and overly intellectual methods of the now-defunct United States Information Agency (USIA). In congressional testimony soon after taking office, Powell had declared: "I'm going to be bringing people into the public-diplomacy function of the department who are going to change from just selling us in the old USIA way to really branding foreign policy, branding the department, marketing the department, marketing American values to the world."

In the wake of September 11, and in line with the new spirit, Beers was reported to be considering "TV and radio spots in which sports stars and celebrities [would] talk up the U.S." Her office's major product was a shiny and colorful 25-page pamphlet, *The Network of Terrorism*, distributed in 36 languages and featuring vivid photographs of the September 11 destruction, harsh commentary on al Qaeda and the Taliban, and denunciations of terrorism by such world leaders as Kofi Annan, Tony Blair, and Jiang Zemin. By far the most prominent quotations, spread throughout the pamphlet in huge type, were by Muslims—three Arab sheiks, one Indonesian cleric, and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)—repudiating the September 11 attacks and the taking of innocent life.

As the war began, the White House also created another agency, the Coalition Information Center (CIC), with offices in Washington, London, and Pakistan. Its purpose was (and remains) to publicize our side's war aims and to provide instantaneous rebuttal of enemy claims about civilian casualties or battlefield successes. Widening its writ, the CIC also gave impetus to the "Afghan women's initiative," which pressed for a role for women in post-Taliban power structures, thereby underscoring the humanly liberating aspect of a victory in Afghanistan.

More important than the work of any of these agencies, the hallmark of America's outreach efforts was the activity of George W. Bush himself. Three days after September 11, the President led an ecumenical service at the National Cathedral at which a spokesman for America's Muslims helped officiate. A few days later, the President visited the Islamic Center, a Washington mosque, where he proclaimed that "Islam is peace" and went on to castigate Americans who had made threatening gestures toward Muslims in the days since September 11. "Women who cover their head in this country must feel comfortable going outside," he declared. "Moms who wear cover must not be intimidated in America."

Bush's embrace extended beyond American Muslims to Muslims around the globe. In his address to Congress nine days after the attack, he enunciated several themes to which he has returned repeatedly in the months since:

> I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans, and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends.

To demonstrate his earnestness in this matter, the President invited a group of American Muslim spokesmen to breakfast at the White House in order "to discuss . . . what our country is going to do to make sure that everybody who is an American is respected." In November, he also invited the ambassadors of the member states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to pray and break the daylong Ramadan fast at the White House, expressing his esteem for Muslim "believers [who] built a culture of learning and literature and science" and with whom "we share the same hope for a future of peace." Secretary of State Powell held a similar dinner at the State Department, and U.S. ambassadors around the world were instructed to do likewise.

TO REINFORCE Bush's message of openness to the faith whose teachings the September 11 terrorists had invoked in attacking us, Charlotte Beers's office printed up thousands of posters in a series called "Mosques of America," for distribution around the world. She herself declared that "We . . . have to be as good at listening as we are at proposing our point of view," so that our interlocutors will "understand . . . that they don't need to kill us to get our attention."

But if we had been better listeners, we might have been disconcerted by what we heard. Thus, the very same Islamic spokesmen whom the administration was celebrating for their anti-terrorist

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sentiments turned out to have, at best, mixed records on the issue. The first of the three sheiks featured in the State Department's pamphlet was Yussef al-Qaradawi of Qatar, who had praised suicide bombings—especially those directed against innocent Israeli civilians—as "martyrdom operations"; according to a columnist in the London Arabic newspaper *Al Hayat*, Qaradawi also endorsed a fatwa issued by another sheik supporting the killing of Americans. The pamphlet's second sheik, Mohammed Sayyed al-Tantawi of Egypt, had indeed criticized attacks on women and children, but subsequently qualified his position by stating that "whoever blows himself up among aggressors . . . who violate the dignity of our brothers in Palestine . . . is a martyr." The third sheik, Abdul Rahman al-Sudais of Mecca, although more outspoken than either of the other two in decrying violence, nonetheless was ambiguous when it came to the bottom line, appealing to Muslims "not to mix up the concepts of real terrorism and legitimate jihad."

The records of the American Muslims to whom the administration turned were no less clouded. CAIR, cited in large print in the State Department's publication and one of the hosts of the President's visit to the Islamic Center, is headed by Nihad Awad, who announced in the wake of the 1993 Oslo accords that he was shifting his support from the PLO to Hamas. Some of the guests at the White House breakfast for Islamic spokesmen likewise boasted histories of support for Hamas or Hizbullah, two groups that had done and continue to do much to earn their places on the United States list of terrorist organizations. And so forth.

If the only Muslim spokesmen we could find to second our message were themselves highly compromised, additional and devastating evidence was soon to emerge of how faintly that message was getting through. In March, the Gallup organization released the results of polling in nine predominantly Muslim countries. In only two of them did the proportion of respondents with a "very favorable" opinion of the United States exceed a tenth of the population: Lebanon, where the number was 18 percent, and Kuwait, where it was 11. But these pro-American respondents were themselves offset by the 30 percent of Lebanese and 23 percent of Kuwaitis who recorded their opinion of us as very *un*favorable. In Saudi Arabia, meanwhile, a mere 7 percent said they held a very favorable view of us, with seven times that number, or 49 percent, at the opposite end of the spectrum; in Pakistan, Gallup had to report an asterisk under "very favorable," signifying a response of less than 1 percent. With the exception of Turkey, the news was hardly any better elsewhere.

When asked specifically about the September 11 attacks, pluralities or bare majorities in most of the nine countries did say they found them "totally unjustifiable"—but much *higher* proportions condemned the U.S. military action in Afghanistan as itself totally unjustifiable. The most startling results were for Kuwait, where a mere 26 percent of respondents found the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon totally unjustifiable, while over twice that number, 55 percent, applied this judgment to America's actions in Afghanistan. It would have been fascinating to see how Saudis assessed the September 11 attacks, but the presumptively pro-American Saudi government forbade Gallup to ask the question, as did the government of Jordan.

To make matters worse, even where substantial numbers found the September 11 attacks unjustifiable, there was widespread denial—except in Turkey—that they had been carried out by Arabs. In Pakistan, deniers outnumbered believers 86 percent to 4, in Kuwait 89 percent to 11—and this was *after* the release of the infamous videotape in which Osama bin Laden had boasted of having planned the attack. Some respondents who denied Arab involvement did (confusingly) name bin Laden or al Qaeda as the responsible party, but among Lebanese, Kuwaitis, and Moroccans the favored culprit was Israel, and for Iranians, America itself.

The import of these stark numbers was soon brought into question by news items challenging the methodology of the Gallup survey and the presentation of its findings. The main target of criticism was a press release, echoed by CNN and *USA Today*, that aggregated the data for the nine countries, thereby yielding numbers that were statistically meaningless since they ignored the wide disparities in the size of the various populations. But the flaw in Gallup's press release was quite irrelevant. However erroneous the procedure, the aggregated numbers did not make the data any more appalling than they would be if taken country by country, which is how I have cited them here.

Another complaint was that the group of nine—Indonesia, Turkey, Morocco, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Jordan, and Lebanon—do not necessarily represent the diversity of the Islamic world as a whole. This argument too is hard to credit. Not only does the list include a rather disparate array of polities, but the sample is hardly

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weighted toward the anti-American side. Within the Muslim Middle East, which is the focus of concern in the war against terrorism, one would be foolish to imagine more comforting results than these in, say, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya, Algeria, or Egypt.

Finally, the government of Kuwait, a country liberated by American power from the clutches of Saddam Hussein only a decade ago, has looked for a way out of its embarrassment over the Gallup figures by complaining that the pollsters sampled residents at large rather than only citizens. (In Kuwait, noncitizens outnumber citizens.) But, as it happens, Gallup did ask respondents in that country to indicate their status; as between citizens and noncitizens, the answers differed hardly at all. In fact, if Kuwaiti citizens alone had been tallied, the percentage finding the September 11 attacks morally justified would have *risen*, from 36 to 40 percent.

Confronted with the Gallup figures, President Bush exclaimed, in a masterpiece of understatement: "We've got work to do."

How is the work to be done? Basically, public diplomacy comprises two broad functions, both of which have traditionally been carried out by specially trained foreign-service officers, mostly stationed in U.S. missions abroad. One is short-term public relations: explaining current U.S. policy, circulating speeches by the President and the Secretary of State, flacking for them on their visits. The other is long-term: academic exchanges, sustaining U.S. libraries and American-studies programs, cultivating relationships with writers and editors receptive to America and its values, even publishing intellectual magazines in local languages.

For decades, both of these functions were the responsibility of the United States Information Agency. Opinion differs as to how successfully they were performed—better in some eras and under some directors than in others, obviously—but in any case, as I have already noted, the USIA is no longer in existence. It was abolished in 1999, with its functions being putatively taken over by the State Department.

This "reorganization" was pushed through by Republican Senator Jesse Helms in order to streamline what he called the "outrageously costly foreign-policy apparatus." But it was first proposed not by Helms but by Bill Clinton's Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, and other former Secretaries of State hurried to endorse it. (USIA's $2-billion annual budget would make a large addition to State's funding.) George P. Shultz, who served under Ronald Reagan, called it "bold and constructive," and James Baker, who served the elder Bush, found it "breathtaking in its boldness and visionary in its sweep."

The consequences of the reorganization were as swift in coming as they were predictable. For one thing, the promised savings never materialized: in its official implementation report, the Clinton administration was soon explaining that the merger of the agencies had instead led to an *increase* in costs, and one that would continue "over the next several fiscal years." For another thing, the long-term side of public diplomacy was eviscerated. This too was predictable: in the State Department, the main focus is not on the long-term but on the immediate; what enhances the Secretary's image is public relations, not libraries or exchange programs. No wonder that, in unveiling his Madison Avenue approach to public diplomacy, Colin Powell had gone out of his way to deprecate the USIA.

There is a third side, or complement, to public diplomacy—namely, international broadcasting. But here, too, such meager instruments as were once in our hands have been diminished in recent times. Post-cold-war budget cuts have weakened the Voice of America to the point where its Arabic service has been broadcasting only seven hours a day in a single dialect (the Arab world is notable for wide variations in pronunciation), reaching an audience estimated at only 2 percent of the population.

But the paucity of our means is not the sole or even the major problem we face. Nor is a solution to that problem to be found in enhancing our technique, either through "rebranding" programs or through attempts to do "a better job of telling the compassionate side of the American story," as the President has also suggested.

The key underlying premise of our entire publicity effort is that we and the Muslim Middle East inhabit the same moral and cognitive universe, and that our task is therefore to demonstrate the congruence of our goals and actions with those shared values. Yet nothing in Middle Eastern politics—from the nearly universal obsessive hatred of Israel, to the brutal conduct of relations among Arab states themselves and among factions within them, to the pitiless way rulers treat their subjects—suggests that there is any truth to that premise, let alone that compassion is a prized value in this part of the world.

Take the one principal theme of our outreach efforts—that our enemy is not Islam but terrorism. To judge by the Gallup poll and other evidence, this is another subject on which we speak a differ-

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ent moral language from those we wish to reach. The numbers who told Gallup they found our war against terrorism even "somewhat" justifiable amounted to 1 percent in Morocco, 2 percent in Indonesia, 4 percent in Pakistan, 9 in Iran, 17 in Kuwait, 19 in Turkey, and 20 in Lebanon; Saudi Arabia and Jordan once again refused to allow Gallup even to ask the question.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan—no hawk, he—discovered all this for himself when he proposed a world treaty against terrorism in the aftermath of September 11. Appealing for "moral clarity," Annan condemned "the deliberate taking of innocent life, regardless of cause or grievance. If there is one principle that all peoples can agree on," he added, "surely it is this." So cautious and anodyne was the wording of the proposed treaty that North Korea itself proclaimed its support. Not so the Islamic Conference, which turned it down flat. Even when Annan "gambled his moral authority" (in the words of a UN diplomat) by a personal appeal to a meeting of the Conference, the Islamic states would not budge or accept any compromise unless a blanket exemption were included for terrorist actions against Israel. At its meeting in Malaysia in early April, the Conference reaffirmed its stance.

If there is "one principle that all peoples can agree on," in short, it is not this one. For most Muslim states (Turkey again excepted), "terrorism" is a concept defined not by the nature of the act but by the cause in whose name it is undertaken, or by the identities of the perpetrators and the victims. Almost any military action *by* Israel is considered terrorism, almost any violence *against* Israel is resistance. For some large number of Muslims, the same would seem to apply if the term "United States" is substituted for "Israel."

This widespread acceptance of terrorism is only one sign of a larger syndrome. The political culture of the Muslim Middle East is mired in tyranny, violence, fanaticism, bigotry, and fantasy. As Fouad Ajami showed in *The Dream Palace of the Arabs*, this is not just a matter of regimes and rulers. It is also a matter of thinkers—academics, journalists, intellectuals, writers and artists, professionals of every stripe: the very people whose hearts and minds we are seeking to address. The widespread denial that it was Arabs who were responsible for the September 11 attacks, the credence given to the preposterous rumor that 4,000 Jewish employees at the World Trade Center stayed home from work on September 11 because the Mossad slipped them the word that it was about to blow up the towers, is evidence of a deficiency not merely in information but in the skills of reality-testing.

Changing this, if it is within our power at all, is not a matter for the short or even the medium term, and it cannot be accomplished by public diplomacy conceived along Madison Avenue lines. If we are going to chip away at the solid wall of hostility that Gallup found, we will have to proceed less by polishing our image than by improving the Arab-Muslim way of looking at things. The problem is not our "brand"; it is their buying habits.

First things first, then. What is needful above all (as Norman Podhoretz argued in these pages last month) is to prosecute the war against terrorism relentlessly until it is won. Our victory need not await local political change; indeed, we dare not risk making it contingent on such change. Rather, the inverse applies: a triumph of arms may facilitate a triumph of ideas that could obviate future resort to military measures.

Contemporary Islamism arose as an idea in response to political rather than religious yearnings. It was not an answer to the question, "what does my faith demand of me?" but rather to the question, "how can I overcome my sense of national humiliation?" And it battened on the image of an America defeated by the Iran of the ayatollahs and of an America and Israel driven from Lebanon by Hizbullah.

It is a cliché that you cannot kill an idea. But the defeat of an *armed* idea can indeed lead to its death. That is what happened to fascism, and we can hope it will happen to Islamic extremism in its turn. Just as we succeeded in imbuing Japan and Germany with liberalism and democracy after we had defeated them decisively on the battlefield, so the defeat of terrorism, which in practice means the defeat of the various regimes that sponsor terror and of the Islamist movement, may open the way to new thinking in the Middle East. Although it is unlikely that we will occupy any countries as long or as thoroughly as we did at the end of World War II, our goal ought to be the same: liberalizing and democratizing cultures that have previously proved resistant to it.

It is here that public diplomacy properly should be brought in—for it is true that, in the long run, if we are to foment some betterment of the political culture of the Muslim Middle East, we will have need of it. In lieu of reprising General MacArthur's role in Japan as an ersatz emperor, we will have to rely on instruments of "soft power" to effect lasting change. Nor need we wait until the moment of military victory to begin deploying those instruments.

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On this front, there is good news and bad. The good news lies in the area of broadcasting, where Congress has funded plans, already in the testing stages, for a new Middle Eastern Radio Network (MERN) that promises to repair many of the defects of our current operation. The plan calls for a mixture of public affairs and music (both Arabic and Western) to be broadcast 24 hours a day on AM and FM bands rather than only on short wave as at present, and in five different regional dialects of Arabic. The network is scheduled to begin full operation this summer.

Plans for revitalizing public diplomacy per se offer a less encouraging picture. The fiasco of the Pentagon's short-lived Office of Strategic Influence, and the embarrassment that was the State Department's pamphlet on terrorism or the President's breakfast with supporters of Hamas and Hizbullah—all give witness to a vacuum of coherent, long-range thought. During the very week of the OSI scandal, the White House confirmed that it was working on its own plan to transform the wartime Coalition Information Center into a permanent office that would be oriented toward a more distant horizon. There is much value in such an idea—the presidency is a bullier pulpit by far than the State Department—but the political pressures that weigh on the State Department weigh even more heavily on the White House. The same purpose would be better served by reinventing a semi-independent agency like the old USIA.

No initiative of public diplomacy is likely to succeed, however, unless it is informed by a spirit of honesty, however politically incorrect, about the depth of the problem we face, and of unapologetic directness in confronting the sordid political culture that gave rise to the attacks of September 11. We need an effective capability for disseminating information and influence, but if its message is one of "anxious propitiation" (in the phrase of the eminent Islamic scholar Bernard Lewis), it will not only fail on its own terms but it will undercut and compromise the very different and necessary message being sent by our awesome military forces. On this front, not only do we have much work to do, we have not even begun.

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Judaism Beyond Words

David Gelernter

Introduction

As far as we know, Samuel Pepys ventured into a London synagogue only once. Once was enough. Pepys is the celebrated 17th-century diarist, and the day he visited the Creechurch Lane Synagogue happened to be Simhat Torah, the holiday marking the completion of the yearly cycle of Torah reading. The congregation was living it up, dancing and singing and drinking uproariously as one does on Simhat Torah. But Pepys took it to be an ordinary Jewish worship service, and drew the obvious conclusions about this bizarre and drunken race called the Jews.

At least Pepys tried. Judaism is in fact hard to know, and profoundly different from what most people expect. A casual passerby—even an active member of a typical American synagogue—sees, ordinarily, only the street façade of this oldest, deepest, and most challenging of Western religions. The actual life of Judaism goes on in hidden courtyards that observant Jews rarely feel called upon to describe.

What is Judaism? The main topics are familiar: God and man; the people Israel; Torah and *mitzvot*, or divine commands; prayer, the Sabbath, and the yearly cycle of sacred ritual. The great themes of Jewish history are likewise familiar: exodus and liberation, chosenness and revelation, exile and redemption, community and peoplehood. But some of Judaism's most important themes are unfamiliar, because, like musical phrases or fragrances, they can only be described imperfectly in words.

What is Judaism? It is one continuous sacred text, founded on the written Torah (or Bible) and the spoken Torah (or Talmud), continuing through several millennia's worth of discussion and commentary laid in translucent leaves over the foundation. One generation's work of study and understanding never obscures, only colors, the previous generation's. Israel developed its religion by successive glazes. You are always catching glimpses—as if you were a scuba diver gazing downward at submerged ancient cities—of older worlds beneath the surface. But you swim not in water but in voices: the Lord's voice upon the waters of Psalm 29; the voice of the shofar, in which mankind addresses its most urgent messages to God; the still, small voice that the prophet Elijah hears on Mt. Horeb;

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the dark voice of Jewish history, the "voice of your brother's blood" crying out from the earth; and the intertwined voices of unbridled joy, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride—the sound of God's presence in the universe.

JUDAISM'S THEMES are conveyed in words. But often, the point of the words is to convey a picture.

Christianity's central theme is a picture—a picture that has been repeated millions of times, in millions of ways. But Judaism's pictures are different. They are too allusive or abstract to paint, and yet they are pictures nonetheless. To understand the internal life of Judaism, you must be able to read the pictures.

Some people have the wrong impression that Judaism is an "unvisual" or even anti-visual religion. It does strongly forbid the worship of images—yet Judaism may be the most "visual" of any Western religion or intellectual system.* Some images are readily transferred from the rich warmth of the mind to canvas or panel or plaster wall; Judaism's theme-images do not tolerate that sort of treatment. In transit from mind to mind, they are embodied in words and sacred rituals.

In ancient manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible, there are no illustrations. The Bible is not a picture book; it is all words, only words. And yet the Bible often speaks in pictures.

I mean this in a specific sense. When you read good narrative writing, invariably you picture the people or events that are being described. The Bible has some of the best narrative prose ever conceived. But that is not what I mean by "speaking in pictures." I mean using pictures to express ideas.

For example: traveling with his large household to meet his warlike brother Esau, the patriarch Jacob trusts God—but he has wronged his brother terribly, and he knows it. He wants to go forward but is afraid to. "Jacob was very frightened, in anguish; he divided the people with him, and the flocks and cattle and camels, into two camps" (Genesis 32:8). Jacob, torn and divided, literally tears his household in two; the torn-apart household embodies the idea that Jacob himself is torn.

"Do not worship other gods or pray to idols, however seductive." This is a law that is asserted many times in the Bible—but embodied once, unforgettably. When the high priest Aaron makes an idol—a calf of solid gold—Moses does not merely destroy it; he pulverizes it, dissolves the dust in water, and makes the people drink. This story, like the story of Jacob, is not a mere narrative incident. The Bible rarely cares about narrative detail per se. Nor does it convey an idea directly. It conveys a picture that conveys an idea.

"The people stood at a distance, and Moses approached the deep darkness where God was" (Exodus 20:18). The Hellenistic Jewish philosopher Philo says: "Moses entered into the darkness where God was, that is, into the unseen, invisible, incorporeal, and archetypal essence of existing things." In other words, Philo says, we must assimilate the whole significance of the picture—Moses slipping outside ordinary experience, disappearing into impenetrable darkness, grappling with the transcendent divine—and not misunderstand it as a mere narrative detail. We must read the picture.

AN IDEA can be asserted or it can be embodied. When you embody an idea—in an object, or story, or story fragment, or isolated image—you show rather than say it. You make an image of the idea. Unfortunately, the besetting technical flaw of modern thought is our incompetence at dealing with images. When it comes to describing, comparing, summarizing, and interpreting them, we are like Moses before Pharaoh: halting, ponderous, tongue-tied—but with no Aaron to speak for us.

Yet this is the way Judaism often expresses itself, and we cannot read Judaism unless we notice and adjust ourselves to its way of operating—unless we look carefully. When we do, a new set of themes emerges alongside the traditional ones, like moonlit trees growing gradually visible as our eyes adjust to the dark. These new themes are "hidden," but hidden in the trickiest place of all: in plain sight.

I am going to discuss four such image-themes, in a series beginning this month: separation; the "sacred screen" that hides God from man and man from God, and draws them together; Judaism's relentless spiraling inward; and the perfect asymmetry between man and woman that shapes the universe.

My aim is to speak as simply as I can, reducing

* If Christianity has one main emblem or graphic symbol, and maybe two or three secondary ones, Judaism has four main emblems and six others that are nearly as important—some old, some fairly new, all in use today. The basic four are the seven-branched Temple menorah, the six-pointed "Jewish star," the tables of the Ten Commandments, and the four Hebrew letters of God's proper name (the four letters appear often in synagogue interiors, not as a word to be read but as a symbol to be seen as a unit). Six others, also ubiquitous in Jewish art and architecture: the lion of Judah; the crown of Torah; the shofar or ram's horn; the lulav and etrog of the festival of Sukkot; the open Torah scroll in outline; and a pair of hands with fingers arranged in the distinctive pattern of the priestly blessing. Many others are fairly common, or used to be. Obviously Judaism has a predilection for pictographs—and not because of illiteracy among the Jewish masses.

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citations to a minimum and assuming no prior knowledge of Jewish texts. Although occasionally I say "we" in describing religious rituals, I do so only in order to speak as an observant Jew, not to exclude readers who are non-observant Jews or not Jews to begin with. On the contrary, these profound image-themes are like *The Iliad* or Chartres or *The Well-Tempered Clavier*: they belong to mankind, and every human being should have the chance to see and understand them.

Havdalah: Separation

Rolling Open

In synagogue, after the reading of the Torah, the open scroll is lifted overhead so the whole congregation can see it. At least three columns of text must be visible. You see the open scroll supported by two strong, tensed arms, wide apart. (The arms had better be strong. The scroll is heavy.)

Why is the moment so resonant? Where have we seen this before? When Israel escaped Egypt through the rolled-open sea, the waters were "piled up, erected upright"; the sea became "a wall to their right and their left" (Exodus 14:22).

Two powerful verticals—and in the space between, Israel's salvation. Sea and scroll are each rolled open temporarily. While they are open, God's holiness is manifest.

The act of *hagbah*—holding the open scroll high—also recalls two other powerful verticals, the matching spires or towers that frame the fronts of many large 19th-century synagogues: for example, the Central Synagogue in midtown Manhattan, built in 1872 and inspired by the gigantic Dohany Street synagogue in Budapest. Synagogue architects did not consciously mimic the shafts of the raised scroll—the matching-spires motif was borrowed from churches and mosques—but these spires, when they are done properly, have a resonant rightness they never had in any mosque or church.

Reading a large number of legal rulings allows you to formulate a principle, an abstract rule. Looking at many pictures allows you to formulate an abstract image. A portrait of Judaism must include the thrust-open waters of the Exodus, the rolled-open Torah scroll raised high, and the façades of certain magnificent synagogues. The underlying theme is separation. This abstract image recurs in many types of *divrei* Torah ("words of Torah" or "things of Torah"), and opens up a vista through the center of Judaism.

Creation

In the beginning, says the book of Genesis, was chaos—*tohu va'vohu*. Chaos is the starting point, and chaos means mixed-togetherness, *un*separation. To banish chaos, you must separate. In the story of creation, God separates light from dark, the waters above from the waters beneath, day from night. To make room for the earth and for man, God forces the chaotic primeval waters open like the Red Sea; the waters are pushed up high and down low.

Creation and Exodus are a pair. When Israel is born at the Red Sea, God separates the waters once more, just long enough for Israel to emerge, to escape into nationhood. God forces an opening: "Raise your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea," He tells Moses, "and split it" (Exodus 14:16). The forced-open sea stands upright in two walls and then tumbles closed over the pursuing Egyptians, no doubt with a waterfall roar and a mist cloud rising afterward.

Creation is a story of God's *ruah* (breath or spirit) suspended over "the face of the water," or "the deep," or the "seas," and of "dry land" appearing in the midst of the water. Exodus is a story of this same *ruah* "pushing back the sea," and of "dry land in the midst of the sea." Creation and Exodus are two versions of one story.

This kind of cosmic separation is unnatural, like a hole in the water—a temporary opening that is bound to close, that is created by force, in the teeth of nature. Left to its own devices, nature flows together. Nature is muck, mixing, impurity, chaos. If separation is salvation, throughout the Bible unseparation means disaster.

When God decides in Noah's time to destroy

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the world, He simply allows the upper and lower waters to run back together again from above and beneath the earth: from "the floodgates of the heavens" and from "the springs of the deep." In the incident just prior to the flood, a culminating example of corruption, "The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and took themselves wives" (Genesis 6:2): a mysterious and ominous story of mixing, unseparation.

Unseparation is a form of divine punishment. When the men of Shinar try to build a tower to heaven (afterward to be known as the tower of Babel), God scatters them across the earth like skittering bowling pins, and turns human language into chaos.

Birth itself—the creation of life—is separation, "parturition." "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the water; let it separate water from water" (Genesis 1:6). The waters pull apart, leaving virgin emptiness, wet like any newborn. The birth imagery is explicit: the spreading apart, the broken waters.

Death is mixing. Flesh rejoins the earth. (In biblical times, dry bones themselves were mixed together in what archeologists call charnel piles.) Judaism turns these homely facts into a huge universal truth, an image of creation-separation-life eternally at risk of plunging downward into jumbled death, a sort of monstrous pounding waterfall, with man (at God's urging) stubbornly refusing to slip over.

Separation is a mere physical gesture. But Judaism gives it the force of an eloquent pictograph, filling it with meaning.

Creating Holiness

"BE SEPARATE!" This could have been Moses' command to the waters of the Red Sea. Issuing commands to nature was (after all) part of his job: during Israel's desert wanderings, he is told to command a rock to yield water. But in fact Moses did not speak to the sea. "Be separate!" is the rabbis' paraphrase in a midrash (rabbinic commentary) on this commandment in the Torah: "Make yourselves holy and be holy, because I am holy" (Leviticus 11:44). The midrash comments: "As I am separate, so you be separate." The standard English lexicon of biblical Hebrew, first published in 1907 and known after its principal authors as Brown, Driver & Briggs, gives the following on the Hebrew *kadosh*, holy: "possibly the original idea is *separation*, *withdrawal*."

Why? Holiness is a spiritual ideal, and separation is just a physical gesture. Why does "be holy" mean "be separate"?

If you start with chaos, you must separate to create. Because God is the Creator, and because man's central obligation is to imitate God, it also becomes man's duty to create. Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, the preeminent talmudist and theologian of 20th-century Judaism, wrote: "When a Jew on the Sabbath eve recites the *kiddush*, the sanctification over the wine, he testifies not only to the existence of a Creator but also to man's obligation to become a partner with the Almighty in the continuation and perfection of His creation."

To be a scientist, artist, or intellectual creator is thus an expression, in Judaism, of the highest sort of piety. But for most people, intellectual creativity in this sense is impossible. Most Jews fulfill their duty to create symbolically, by separating. The halakha is a complex thing, but separation is one of its most important unifying themes. ("Halakha" is the body of Jewish law that is based on the Bible and the Talmud, which are root and trunk. Literally it means a way of walking.)

How do we understand the evil consequences of mixing, as of angels ("sons of God") and women? Set the story in its halakhic context. In the prescriptive legislation of the Torah, mixing different species in the breeding of animals is forbidden; it ruins the walls of separation God has built against chaos—dikes against the permanently impending flood. Mixing different types of seed for sowing, or different stuffs in a garment, is also forbidden. The mixing of Jews and the people of Canaan is strongly forbidden: "Separate yourselves from the peoples of the land!" (Ezra 10:11).

Men are not to dress like women, or women like men (Deuteromony 22:5)—the point being, according to the great 12th-century exegete Abraham ibn Ezra, not to specify how men or women *should* dress but simply that they should dress differently.* Many people over the years have been surprised at the vehemence with which Rabbi Soloveitchik (who epitomized everything humane in Orthodox Judaism) affirmed the requirement that men and women sit separately in synagogue. But one does not lightly pull up and toss out a rule whose roots reach as deep into Judaism as this one's.

More fundamental still are the rabbinic elaborations of kosherness or *kashrut* (milk and meat must be separated) and family purity (husband and wife must be separated, periodically). Even more fundamental is the Sabbath, a separation in time that is connected explicitly in the Torah to creation *and* Exodus.

The struggle between chaos and separation is

* This biblical verse seemed nearly inexplicable to some medieval biblical commentators; do men *want* to dress like women, or vice versa? A civilization in which men shaved their chests and women built their biceps was beyond their wildest nightmares.

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constant and ongoing. Left to itself, the world goes back to chaos. Maintaining separation and holiness is an ongoing fight requiring a constant outpouring of energy. Death is not just a fact, death is a force. It is the force of unholiness, unraveling, unseparating, yielding in the end the chaotic desolation of the valley of dry bones.

The Jew is separate from the non-Jew; man is separate from all other creatures. Thus, the prayerbook addresses God: "You separated man from the beginning." The Torah says: "Do not follow a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2). Nothing is easier than to melt into the mass. Nothing is harder than to be separate. The Talmud says: "In a place where there are no men, strive to be a man." To separate the waters of chaos, to separate yourself from the crowd—both are acts of holiness. The halakha requires that we swim upstream against nature, against time, toward light, toward sanctity. To separate yourself is to imitate God, the "Separator"—in the words of the end-of-Sabbath, end-of-holiday blessing—"between holy and ordinary, between light and dark, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of creation."

Each ritual act a Jew performs has private significance, but at the same time makes a philosophical proclamation. Each time he makes a separation or looks through a separation or marches into a separation, he shouts out loud his defiance of chaos and nature and death—acting (on however small a scale) against them, replacing one stone of the wall that nature constantly tears down.

To "choose life," as the Torah commands, is deliberate futility. No matter what you choose, death is what you get. But Jews are commanded to defy the futility and choose life anyway.

A Gap in the Week

BEING SEPARATE can mean separating yourself from the world around you—a social separation. It can mean forcing open a gap in the cosmos. It can also mean creating a gap in time. There is no other way to understand the Sabbath, which starts with the *kiddush*, in which the Sabbath is linked explicitly to creation and the Exodus—Judaism's two fundamental separation events—and ends with the *havdalah*, or separation blessing.

The Sabbath begins on Friday evening with candlelight and a blessing over a raised cup of wine. It ends Saturday evening with candlelight and a blessing over a raised cup of wine. There are braided loaves of bread at the start of the Sabbath and a braided, many-wicked candle at the end. Symbolically we might almost be frozen in time from start to finish—blessing God in candlelight with cup raised, as if no time had passed.

The Sabbath is a gap in time—which must be braced with strong laws or it will be overwhelmed by ordinary daily life, and close like a hole in the water. It is hard to open a gap in time or nature, however temporary. The splitting of the Red Sea shows God's awe-inspiring power. ("When God divided the Red Sea for Israel," says a midrash, "it was heard of from one end of the universe to the other.") Other kinds of separation are hard, too. It is hard to separate yourself from the world at large; hard to pull free from your daily life to keep the Sabbath; hard to carry out all the distillations, purifications, and holiness-creating steps that Judaism requires. Keeping the Sabbath, forcing a separation in time, is just as hard in its way as commanding the sea to part.

It is *supposed* to be hard to keep the Sabbath. It takes effort, and transforms you. The gap must be forced open and you must act, physically and spiritually. When a man lifts the Torah scroll by its two handles, raising it high, and wide-open enough so that we can see three columns of text—a separation through which we glimpse holiness—how long can he hold it there? A Torah scroll is heavy. Not long.

To fulfill God's commandments as Judaism understands them is difficult, but is rarely felt by observant Jews to be a burden. To see why, consider one of the liturgy's most haunting phrases: Jews ask of God that He "spread over us the shelter of Your peace." God's commandments seem to intrude into every corner of life, but those who observe them feel *sukkat shlomekha*, "the shelter of Your peace," overspreading their lives. Unlike his friend and fellow-philosopher Martin Buber, the German-Jewish thinker Franz Rosenzweig "needed no theological theory when life itself—lived under the law—testified to the presence of the divine."*

To separate is to prevent mixing, to keep the waters apart. But once the "sacred gap" is (briefly) opened, there is a different kind of mixing—man goes to meet God, God to meet man. The Sabbath, the rabbis say, is a foretaste of *olam ha'ba*, of the world to come. Jews rush out (like surging water) through the forced-open gap in time, to live for a moment in a paradise outside the walls of the universe. If all Israel were only to keep *one* Sabbath perfectly as halakha prescribes, say the rabbis of the

* Nahum N. Glatzer, ed., *Franz Rosenzweig on Jewish Learning* (1955). This fact frees Judaism from the "problem of faith." It has long been observed, even by Jewish atheists, that keeping the commandments creates a "shelter of peace" whether one has faith or not. (Of course it is possible that, having noticed this fact, one acquires faith.)

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Talmud, the messiah would come: God's messenger would enter the world through the forced-open gap. (Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai differs: if all Israel were only to keep *two* Sabbaths.)

A Gap in the Year

THE CEREMONY that concludes the Sabbath is called "separation," *havdalah*. God has used the Sabbath to create a gap or separation in the loop of time, as you might snip a gold ring and force the cut ends apart. The Sabbath, writes the historian Yosef Yerushalmi, "came to be experienced as a day beyond the bounds of historical time, and eventually even as a weekly anticipation of the end of time." But observant Jews do not simply let the Sabbath lapse. No work is done, the normal routine is not resumed, until, by saying the *havdalah* blessing, we cross between sacred and profane time.

There is another sacred gap in time: the ten days beginning on New Year's and ending on the Day of Atonement. The rabbis understood these two occasions, and the "days of awe" between them, in terms of a held-open gate. Through this open gate man presses toward God and God toward man. "Even though penitence and appeal are always beautiful," writes Maimonides, "in the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur they are more beautiful and are accepted immediately." When the gate is open, divine forgiveness flows outward and Israel is urged to come in; in Hebrew, "penitence" and "return" are the same word. "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them, praising God" (Psalms 118:19).

The Talmud introduces the idea of three books of judgment that are opened on the New Year. The books of the wholly righteous and the wholly wicked need not stay open long. But the third book, for everyone else, stays open until Yom Kippur. "Man is judged on Rosh Hashanah and his decree is sealed on Yom Kippur": as the commentaries make clear, the rabbis do *not* believe that good men can expect to thrive and bad men to suffer, but the image of judgment books opening and shutting embodies a state of mind. To live a life of intense self-examination is beyond most of us, but to live that way for the ten days from New Year to the Day of Atonement is—perhaps—just barely possible.

The ceremony that ends the Sabbath dwells on God the Separator, opener of sacred gaps; similarly at the ending of Yom Kippur, in the ceremony called *ne'ilah*—"closing." Originally this "closing" referred to closing gates on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. By developing the idea of divine judgment books and heavenly gates, the rabbis connect this physical closing to the metaphysical closing of the sacred gap in time. At the end of Yom Kippur, the prayerbook speaks urgently of the cosmic gap and how temporary it is, how necessarily, intrinsically impermanent. "Open the gate to us, at the time of the gate-closing, for the day fades, the day is fading—the sun sets, fading—let us enter your gates!" (When night falls, the city gates are shut.)

Over the years the connection has grown clearer. Today the *ne'ilah* service is performed before the open ark. Ordinarily, the ark is kept open (a sacred gap, revealing the holy Torah scrolls inside) only for very brief periods. But it stays open throughout *ne'ilah*, which can last three-quarters of an hour or longer, and this unaccustomed, drawn-out opening focuses our attention on the open but soon-to-shut gates of judgment. During *ne'ilah* we say—this is the climax of the Yom Kippur prayers—"You give your hand to sinners; Your right hand is outstretched to receive penitents," to help them through the closing gates. Which recalls Israel's escape through the separation of the Red Sea, where Moses said: "Your right hand, Lord, is gloriously powerful . . . ; You stretched out Your right hand; the earth swallowed them." There, God's right hand drowns His enemies; here, it rescues the drowning.

The final declarations of *ne'ilah* are the ones prescribed for a man on the point of death (the closing gap of time). We end the service by stretching out one final moment with a single drawn-out blast of the shofar. Yom Kippur ends, the books of judgment close. The separation disappears. The gates are shut.*

COMBINE THE gesture of separating and the idea of time instead of space and you arrive at time drawn thin—not broken like the sea but drawn so fine we can see right through it, to God on the other side.

Israel's salvation begins at the burning bush, which draws Moses through the desert to God's presence. Moses is astounded: "The bush burns with fire, yet the bush is not consumed" (Exodus 3:2). The miracle is not the burning but the *continued* burning. The dry thorns should have burnt to black dust in an instant. But time has been stretched out. That burning bush (a midrash says) *is* Judaism—a fire too hot to last, a life too intense to continue, a gap bound to close.

* Unless they remain open just a crack until the day known as Hoshana Rabba toward the end of the festival of Sukkot (which follows Yom Kippur), when widespread belief holds that one's judgment is "sealed." The rabbis know the gates must close, but try to make them stay open till the last possible moment.

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Separated from the World

RABBINIC JUDAISM was created by a group of thinkers called Pharisees—in Hebrew, *perushim*, "the separate ones." In talmudic Hebrew, betrothal is *kiddushin*—sanctification, from the root *kadosh*, meaning "holy" and suggesting "separate." A betrothed or "sanctified" woman declares herself separate from other men, set apart for her husband.

To separate yourself from the world around you is hugely difficult—harder than holding the rolled-open scroll overhead. Pull yourself away, pull apart, go off by yourselves, on your own: a command that Jews find terribly hard even when their lives depend on it. Pulling loose from Germany in the 1930's was just as hard as pulling loose from Egypt three millennia earlier. Moses predicted that Israel would be reluctant to follow him out of Egypt, and he was right.

To pull yourself away from the society in which you live may be the hardest separation of all—like dragging yourself awake in the dead of night. "Man's general way of behaving," Maimonides notes matter-of-factly, "is to be influenced in his opinions and his deeds by his neighbors and friends—letting his customs be like the customs of the people of the country."

But separation governs the Bible's view of how Israel should live among the nations. The entry *into* the promised land across the Jordan is modeled explicitly on the Exodus from Egypt: "The priests, bearers of the ark of God's covenant, stood solidly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; all Israel passed on dry ground" (Joshua 3:17).

But it is not just the river waters that are rolled apart: the Lord "will displace indeed, displace from before you the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Hivite, the P'rizite, the Girgashite, the Amorite, the Jebusite" (Joshua 3:10). Later, King David wins a victory over the Philistines and proclaims: "God has broken my enemies before me like the breaking of water" (2 Samuel 5:20).

The Bible insists on it: Israel was no virgin territory, the land was not empty. Its pagan inhabitants were rolled apart, and the Jews occupied a forced-open gap still wet with an earlier culture. Where is there a more astonishing passage than Deuteronomy 6:10-12? When, it says, God brings you to the promised land of "great good cities that you did not build, houses full of everything good that you did not fill, and hewn cisterns you did not hew, and vineyards and olive-groves that you did not plant, and you eat and are satisfied, watch yourself!—lest you forget the Lord Who brought you out of the land of Egypt."

The clearing-out of the land is here connected explicitly to the parting of the Red Sea; later, the children of Israel (for their sins, the rabbis taught) would be engulfed by the returning pagan peoples just as Egypt was engulfed by the "returning" Red Sea waters. A lament for the black fast of Tisha b'Av, the darkest day of the ritual year (on which, tradition holds, both the first and second Temples were destroyed): "The sea-waves pounded but stood up like a wall—when I left Egypt; the waters overflowed and ran over my head—when I left Jerusalem."

THREE DIFFERENT but related crises in Jewish history:

Moses knew that the Jews would resist separation from Egypt. They suffered there, but Egypt was their home. "My Lord," he says, "Why did you send me?" After they have escaped to the wilderness, they complain to Moses: "There weren't graves enough in Egypt, so you had to take us to die in the desert? What is this you have done to us, bringing us out of Egypt?" (Exodus 14:11). In the Torah's vivid prose you hear their voices, and ours.

After the Nazis took power in 1933 and before the war in 1939, it was hard but usually not quite impossible for a Jew to leave Germany. Some tore themselves away. Some did not. It was not only a matter of Nazi-created obstacles. These Jews were required to take the enormously painful step of separating themselves from their native worlds.

American Jews are asked to take a vastly smaller step of separation, on a vastly easier scale, when they are requested to disapprove of their sons and daughters marrying Gentiles. Overwhelmingly, they refuse.

"Be separate!" says that midrash; otherwise Judaism ceases. But it's not so easy. The waters desperately want to close.

Judaism calls on Jews to be separate; Jews have often been forced by their anti-Semitic neighbors to be separate. These two facts could hardly be unrelated. We will never know exactly how anti-Semitism began, but we do know that the separateness of Jew and Gentile represents a collaboration.

Historically this separation took a peculiar and characteristic form: Jew and Gentile rarely glared at each other across a shared border. More often the Jew hid out among Gentiles, by choice or necessity, often in a separate section of town. But even before the ghetto there was the cave. The cave foretold the ghetto.

We read in the Talmud about the 2nd-century teacher and patriot Rabbi Shimon ben (or bar) Yochai, a student of Rabbi Akiba who withdrew from society and lived in a cave for thirteen years: he had

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spoken against Rome, and the Romans, true to form, had sentenced him to death. Eventually the sentence was lifted, and Rabbi Shimon returned to society. According to the Talmud, one result of his long withdrawal was a huge increase in his mental powers.

Naturally. Life in a cave is a life of sensory deprivation, and sensory deprivation leads to vivid imaginings. To be cut off from your surroundings in a cave or ghetto is to be put in a desperate position—and partially explains the unique passion and intensity of Jewish culture. Not for nothing does the Zohar put its most important thoughts in the mouth of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai.

The Zohar is a mystical treatise, in part a commentary on the Bible, written by Moses de Leon in Spain between 1280 and his death in 1305. It occupies a unique position in the history of post-talmudic literature. It became the central text of the kabbalah, a school of mystical thought that originated in Provence and Catalonia in the late 12th century, and it "gained a place in the national consciousness as a canonical text third only to the Bible and Talmud" (in the words of Isaiah Tishby). The Zohar has also been associated almost from the first with quacks who have hitched it to all sorts of vague and vacuous machines; nowadays you find the "New Age" crowd gathered around it. But the world of the Zohar itself is a world of serious Judaism.

The Zohar is a strange, brilliant, fantastically vivid stream of consciousness, the work (writes Arthur Green) of "a poetic imagination so extraordinary that any attempt to account for it, either by the author himself or by his readers, seems to lead beyond theories of poetics and toward some form of prophecy or revelation." Perhaps that is why it seemed natural to atttribute the Zohar to Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai, who was known as the man who had spent long years in a cave. From persecution and withdrawal to the dark of the cave—where you see little and imagine much—to the dreamlike profusion of the Zohar.

The Zohar begins as a commentary on the Torah. It explains the Bible by offering unexpected connections, and the best way to picture the Zohar itself may be in terms of other unexpected connections. The Zohar suggests the illuminated insular gospel books of the Dark Ages, especially the Book of Kells; it resonates with the 20th-century novels of Vladimir Nabokov, especially *Pale Fire*.

Like the Zohar, the Book of Kells is a commentary-in-art that overwhelms us with its colors, its dazzling imagery, its sheer imaginative density. "The student engrossed in the exploration of these unexpected patterns," writes the art historian Françoise Henry, "is soon overpowered by a feeling of both strength and mystery." She might have been writing about the Zohar. As for Nabokov, his *Pale Fire* resembles the Zohar in many ways, from its unorthodox combination of narrative and commentary, its obsession with an invented world complete with invented books, and the seeming sprawl of its artfully contrived stream of consciousness, to its fascination with light and color and mirrors.

JUDAISM IS Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai. In the broadest sense, sensory deprivation has been its deliberate strategy for three millennia. This is the ultimate philosophical outcome of "separation." Judaism starved its appetite for pictures of God (proscribed in the Ten Commandments), starved its need for contact and companionship with neighboring peoples. From the destruction of the second Jewish state by Rome in 70 C.E. until the Jews' gradual emergence into Western civilization starting slowly in the 17th century, the Jewish people lived in Rabbi Shimon's cave.

There is no need to overstate the degree of isolation; influence flowed steadily across the Jewish-Gentile border, in both directions. Yet the cave existed. No nation was ever so scattered; none was ever so coherent.

Their enemies forced the Jews into it, as Rabbi Shimon's enemies had; the Jews chose to be inside because they despised their enemies, as Rabbi Shimon did. When the threat abated and they staggered out into daylight, their pent-up power, like his, was astounding. They emerged ravenous, with their thoughts racing.

The whole story of Jewish achievement in modern art and science has yet to be told. But more astounding still is the story of what happened *inside*, when the whole genius of the people focused on the practice and poetry, the art and philosophy of Torah. Because of its long confinement, Jewish intellectual history has the strange, brilliant intensity of a communal dream. The best word for what the Jews accomplished in the cave of exile, set apart and alone, is *zohar*—the Hebrew word means "dazzling splendor."

Moses de Leon's story about the authorship of the Zohar is thus false historically but true artistically. "In a vision I will make Myself known to him; in a dream I will speak to him" (Numbers 12:6). The Zohar says: "A dream needs a good interpretation."

Every literary text represents or approximates a train of thought. Every "thought style" has its place on a continuous spectrum of possibilities, ranging from highly-focused analytic thought at one end to the richer, more complex, and more enigmatic pos-

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sibilities of dream-thought at the other. Our own styles of thinking (as of speaking or living) reflect our fixed personalities and our varying states of mind, which change over the course of a day or a lifetime.

Judaism's sacred literature is epitomized by the Bible, Talmud, and Zohar. The thought-style represented by these sacred texts tends to be closer than nearly anything else in Western literature to the "dream-thought" end of the cognitive spectrum. I have mentioned the central role of images in the Bible, and the dreamlike character of the Zohar; many people have commented on the "stream of consciousness" quality of talmudic and midrashic literature, most recently Jonathan Rosen in *The Talmud and the Internet*. As the Red Sea escape "resonates" with creation, with the lifting of the Torah, and with certain synagogue façades, so the cave of Rabbi Shimon resonates with the command to "be separate," with the history of Jewish ghetto life, and with the dreamlike character of Jewish sacred literature.

Chaos Impends

The world 3,000 years ago was divided into theists and atheists; so is the world today. Science has not changed the equation. Most of today's scientists are nonbelievers—and would have been nonbelievers had they lived three millennia ago. Meanwhile, no religious man has ever been made irreligious by science.

In recent decades, some thinkers have decided to use science to support religion. Fair enough; but the way to do it is not to drag science down—not (for example) to promote a spurious "creation science" that testifies mainly to the creation scientists' own weak imaginations, their inability to grasp the power and beauty of the scientific case and the raging, awe-inspiring force of large numbers, like crashing breakers that consume rock. And they miss the point of the Bible's creation story, which is not to teach about cosmology but to teach about God and man. The scientific facts are of no interest to the Torah.

The way to employ science on behalf of religion is to leave science alone but use its discoveries to write a commentary on the deep, sometimes inexplicable discoveries of religion. Or, start with an observation by Rabbi Soloveitchik: "The modern scientist does not try to explain nature. He only duplicates it." He duplicates it in mathematical models that allow him to make predictions. He cannot answer and does not ask the question: why *should* it be this way?

Thus we have a basic image of Judaism—separation—an image to which the Bible and the rabbis return obsessively. We try to understand: why is it so important? What does it tell us? Thermodynamics can help explain: ultimately, physics tells us, the universe runs down. Not that the rabbis anticipated or could have cared less about thermodynamics, but the Bible and the rabbis saw and felt intuitively what scientists have since succeeded in measuring and codifying. They saw and felt that the universe runs down. "Entropy" increases. Entropy is disorder, mixing together. In physical systems, it can be measured precisely. Nature works inexorably to disperse, to eliminate distinctions, to bring all things up or down to the same level.

In human society (where physics comes in only by analogy), a people disperses—mixes with other peoples and gets lost like a teardrop in the ocean. But Judaism is against dispersal. "He will gather you together again, from all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you. If your outcasts are at the heavens' very edges, the Lord your God will gather you thence; thence will He take you" (Deuteronomy 30:3-4). Every organism dies, its physical stuff disperses, it rejoins the earth. The Torah and the rabbis know it, but they are against death. Of course death is natural; but Judaism is against nature, too. It is against entropy. It is against the inevitable unraveling of the universe. "Today I call heaven and earth to witness against you—life and death have I laid out before you, the blessing and the curse; choose life and live, you and your children!" (Deuteronomy 30:19).*

The rabbis see the dangers clearly; they see chaos in the inevitable rising tide. (But they do not believe in "inevitable.") They have always seen the danger that Judaism will vanish as kosher mixes with *treif*, holidays with normal days, Sabbath with the rest of the week; as Jews return to nature and become worshipers of the earth or skies or ecosystem; as they marry Gentiles, do as Gentiles do, and sink back, with a well-earned sigh of relief, into the muddy ocean of mankind. "It is very hard to drive out pagan spirits," the scholar and historian Shalom Spiegel notes coolly, "and each generation must renew the battle against them."

The rabbis have always understood that the opposite of sanctity is unseparateness—which makes

* Judaism is against nature, but that does not mean that man is entitled to abuse nature. A midrash: "At the time the Holy One Blessed be He created the first man, He took him and showed him again all the plants of the Garden of Eden and said to him—look at My work, how beautiful and blessed! And everything I created, I created for your sake. Beware that you do not damage or destroy My universe! For if you damage it, there is no one to repair it afterward." At the same time, man is not allowed to erase the separation between himself and nature. There is no greater sin than that.

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the Red Sea escape *the* defining version of "sacred separation," and Judaism's basic image. With the Egyptians chasing them and the terrible power of the split-open sea pressing in from both sides, a frightened line of Jews keeps chaos at bay, interposing their bodies between the piled-up waters. When they are gone, chaos returns. Mankind is overwhelmed. Sanctity vanishes like a hole in the sea.

Israel, the Jewish people, believes that it is God's messenger, and that its presence on earth is God's presence, holding the waters back. It is an arrogant belief and also a humbling one, and it is nearly impossible to bear. Jews are forbidden to pray for the one thing they want most: to be like everybody else. "Happy are Israel!" says the Zohar. "The Holy One Blessed be He has separated them from all other nations." Israel's arrogance, its greatness, and its noble defiance are all there in that one word, happy.

The Ark Closes

ALTHOUGH THE "separation theme" is in some ways slippery and subtle and allusive, in the end there is no way to miss it. The public life of Judaism centers on the synagogue, and synagogue worship centers on the openings and shuttings of the holy ark. This is Judaism's heartbeat. When the ark is opened, we see holiness in the tangible form of the holy scrolls. Whenever it opens, it is bound to close again soon.

After we open the ark on the Sabbath and festivals and before we remove a scroll and open *it*, we sing words from the Zohar: "May it be Your will to open my heart to the Torah." (The ark opens, the heart opens.) We read from the Torah; then we display it held high, open; then we roll it closed. Having replaced the scroll, facing the ark and prepared to shut its doors, we repeat a plea from the end of the book of Lamentations: "Make us return to You, Lord, and we *will* return!"—as if we wanted to squeeze through the ark's closing doors and disappear into a different order of existence; "make our days new again, as of old!" As if we wanted not *merely* to stretch time thin or break it in two but to run it backward—from age to youth, scattered to gathered, broken to whole, death to birth. Judaism stands not for acceptance but defiance. The ark closes.

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Trading with the Enemy

Gary Milhollin

In March, President Bush marked the six-month anniversary of September 11 by warning us once again of the peril posed by weapons of mass destruction. From the south lawn of the White House, he cautioned that "terrorist groups are hungry for these weapons, and would use them without a hint of conscience." The result, he said, would be "blackmail, genocide, and chaos."

He was right. Yet in one crucial respect the actions of his administration have been completely at odds with these strong words of warning. For the White House is now pushing a bill in Congress that would make it easier for terrorists and the nations that support them to obtain precisely such weapons of mass destruction. The bill would weaken the limits on sales of "dual-use" technology—civilian items that can also help in developing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them.

The term of art here is export controls—restrictions on the power of American companies to sell things abroad that could do us harm. As it happens, while Bush was still on the campaign trail in 2000, he pledged to reduce these controls if elected to office. In those bygone days before September 11, the world (it seemed) had become a peaceful place, and we could safely let American companies make a little more money. But now the question is different: how to ensure that our own technology does not help the people who want to kill us.

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Export control is a hoary topic, dating from the years immediately following World War II. In our efforts to rebuild Europe and fashion NATO as a barrier to Soviet expansionism, it became obvious that the West would be inflicting serious harm on itself if American goods and equipment were being sold to the Soviets or the Chinese. There had to be a fence around the United States and its allies, one inside which trade could flourish but that would be strong enough to keep useful technology—especially of the military sort—away from rivals outside. The fence was COCOM, the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls, born in 1949.

COCOM was a phenomenal success. It did not stop everything from getting out, any more than the best police force can stop all crime. But by systematically helping to deprive the East of the West's technology, it left Russia and its allies in the dust. After the end of the cold war, COCOM officials toured the former Warsaw Pact to measure the historical impact of controls. What they learned from former East-bloc officials was that equipment had sometimes been smuggled in, but spare parts and service had been impossible to obtain. This made it risky to build manufacturing operations around such equipment. Even today, more than a decade after the end of the cold war, the dilapidated indus-

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trial infrastructure of Russia and Eastern Europe offers lingering testimony not only to the abysmal failures of socialist planning but to the power of export controls.

More recently, documents found by UN inspectors in Iraq after the Gulf war showed how export controls had seriously hampered that country's nuclear-design teams, forcing them to spend time and money trying to engineer essential items they could not import. Controls also stopped Iraq's drive to make a medium-range missile—one that would have been invulnerable to U.S. Patriot missile defenses. Without such restrictions on his purchases, Saddam Hussein might have come into possession of a nuclear weapon, a medium-range missile, or both, by the onset of the Gulf war.

Finally, export controls had beneficial effects on nonhostile regimes as well, contributing to a general atmosphere of restraint and caution. Thus, when both Argentina and Brazil agreed to give up their nuclear-weapons potential in the 1980's, a principal reason was the cost imposed on them by American export controls, which had prevented them from buying vital technologies like supercomputers. Both countries preferred in the end to be seen as part of the solution to arms proliferation rather than as part of the problem. In effect, export controls had bought time, slowing these nations' weapons programs until the political winds shifted, and had created an incentive for them to qualify as reliable recipients of advanced technology.

WITH THE end of the cold war, export controls entered a period of decline. The Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact were gone. The new threat facing us—a number of countries building weapons of mass destruction—was more fluid, and there was less agreement on how to deal with it. In 1993, R. James Woolsey observed at his confirmation hearing for the directorship of the Central Intelligence Agency that "We have slain a large dragon, but we live now in a jungle filled with a bewildering variety of poisonous snakes." How to contend with those snakes was up to the Clinton administration, which took office that same year.

Things did not go well. At his own confirmation hearing for the position of Deputy Secretary of Defense, William Perry, who would later become Secretary of Defense, declared that controlling dual-use technology was a "hopeless task." Control, he said, "only interferes with a company's ability to succeed internationally." This put Perry, a former electronics executive, in direct conflict with the UN inspectors then in Iraq who were reporting that without strict maintenance of export controls, Saddam Hussein would soon reconstitute his mass-destruction war machine.

Whether Perry realized it or not, virtually every part of a nuclear weapon is made with dual-use equipment. Iraq, in fact, had already imported dual-use "isostatic" presses to shape nuclear-bomb parts, dual-use mass spectrometers to sample bomb fuel, and dual-use electron-beam welders to increase the range of its Scud missiles. During the Gulf war, one of these increased-range Iraqi Scuds had killed a group of U.S. soldiers in their barracks in Saudi Arabia, prompting a Pentagon official to remark that "when you talk about export controls, you're not talking about politics, you're talking about body bags."

There was (and there remains) no hope of thwarting the Iraqi—or the Iranian—bomb and missile program without controlling such dual-use exports. Back in the 80's and early 90's, under the Reagan and (first) Bush administrations, the Defense Department had successfully battled attempts by the industry-friendly Commerce Department to dilute controls. Under Clinton and Perry, this institutional counterweight disappeared. As one disillusioned Pentagon staffer complained, "We now have four layers of bosses who don't believe in export controls." The bosses included Ashton Carter, Perry's assistant secretary, who actually proposed giving Pakistan the special electronic locks that make nuclear warheads safer, as well as supplying nuclear fuel to India, and Carter's own deputy, Mitchell Wallerstein, who had directed studies decrying export controls for the National Academy of Sciences.

With the Pentagon thus neutered, the Commerce Department was able to give exporters what they wanted. The two greatest beneficiaries were the American computer industry and the People's Republic of China (PRC). Before 1996, China had been denied virtually all access to high-performance computers. These computers can simulate the conditions inside an exploding nuclear warhead or the forces acting on a missile from launch to impact; they enable a country to build not only better missiles but smaller, more powerful nuclear weapons without explosive testing. Between 1996 and the end of 1998, China succeeded in acquiring over 600 such high-performance computers from American companies, all with the approval of the Commerce Department.

It is a standard condition of U.S. export licenses that a U.S. official must be allowed to verify that a

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dual-use item has not been diverted from its declared civilian use. In the case of these computers, China has refused to comply: by January 2002, it had rebuffed some 700 U.S. requests for verification. What the Chinese are hiding is indubitably the fact that the next generation of Chinese nuclear warheads is being developed with American equipment.

China needed help with its missiles, too. Before 1996, an embarrassing series of launching failures had destroyed valuable satellites and put in doubt not only the reliability of China's space rockets, but its intercontinental ballistic missiles, which are pointed at American cities and bear thermonuclear warheads. Never fear: to the rescue came two of America's leading satellite manufacturers, Hughes Electronics and Loral Space and Communications.

One or both of these companies helped China improve its guidance systems and nose cones, and taught the Chinese how to diagnose launch failures. In order to orbit their own satellites cheaply on Chinese rockets, the companies also gave China technology that could, in the words of a later congressional investigating committee, increase "the reliability of all PRC ballistic missiles." In doing all this, the two companies, according to the committee, "deliberately acted without the legally required licenses and violated U.S. export-control laws." Since getting American help, China's rockets have enjoyed 21 successful launches in a row.

Both Hughes and Loral had special ties to President Bill Clinton. Hughes was led at the time by C. Michael Armstrong, a strong Clinton supporter whom the President chose to be chairman of an advisory group with a key role in shaping U.S. export-control policy. From this perch, Armstrong (who has since become the chief executive officer of AT&T) helped convince Clinton to dilute controls on satellites. The other company, Loral Space and Communications, was led by Bernard Schwartz, the largest single donor to the Democrats' 1996 campaign fund. The illegal aid extended to China by the companies run by these men marked one of the lowest of the low points struck in the Clinton administration.

WOULD THINGS change under Bush? In the first eight months of the new administration, little happened on the export-control front for good or ill. But in September, America was suddenly at war. Soldiers had to be sent to Afghanistan, and to make that possible the United States had to bolster its position in South Asia.

India was the first diplomatic port of call. U.S. officials were only too happy to entertain India's warm public offers of help, and to accept Indian declarations of common purpose. The display was calculated to exert irresistible pressure on the real U.S. target, Pakistan. This beleaguered Islamic country, India's neighbor and arch rival, was indispensable to U.S. operations in Afghanistan, but its president, Pervez Musharraf, had to be persuaded to sign on. Inviting in the West would anger Islamic extremists; not inviting in the West risked an American alliance with India that would leave Pakistan isolated and linked to terrorism. With America playing the India card, Musharraf had to do the right thing.

How would the United States reward India and Pakistan for their cooperation? There was money. There was the friendship and gratitude of the world's only military and economic superpower. And there was the possibility of doing something about export controls.

In 1998, both India and Pakistan had set off nuclear test explosions, and the Clinton administration (in one of its periodic fits of clarity) had expressed American disapproval by announcing sanctions: henceforth, export licenses would be denied to Indian and Pakistani companies known to be participating in their countries' nuclear and missile efforts. After September 11, however, the sanctions were quietly dropped. A long list of Indian companies, plus a few in Pakistan, had a green light to purchase dual-use equipment from the United States.

Among the Indian companies so benefited was Hindustan Aeronautics, a major producer of nose cones, engines, and fuel tanks for India's largest rockets and missiles. Another was Godrej & Boyce, which also produces rocket components like engines, motor casings, and heat shields. A third was the National Aerospace Laboratory, which performs rocket and missile research, does wind-tunnel and ground-vibration testing, and analyzed the first flight test of India's nuclear-capable Prithvi missile. And a fourth was Walchandnagar Industries, producer of coolant pumps, end shields, and reaction vessels for India's nuclear reactors; many of these reactors operate outside the purview of international inspection, which means that the plutonium they make is available for use in atomic bombs.

All of these firms are unquestionably manufacturing weapons of mass destruction, and all of them have been cleared for sensitive American exports—a paradoxical consequence, to say the least, of our determination to respond forcefully and globally to a terrorist attack on American soil.

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WHICH BRINGS us back to the bill the administration is now supporting in Congress. The bill, unlike the present export law which it would replace, makes no attempt to strike a balance between national security and freedom of trade. Essentially a one-sided list of provisions advocated by commercial interests, it is at loggerheads with the administration's own efforts to protect the American population after September 11.

One such effort involves the U.S. Customs Service. To help keep terrorists from getting weapons of mass destruction, Customs is sending out agents to warn American companies about selling approximately 100 items on a "most-dangerous-goods" list. The list was drawn up under the "Shield America" program, which urges companies to ascertain the true identity of the buyers of these dual-use goods.

Incredible as it may sound, the bill before Congress would decontrol many of the same items that the Customs Service is warning about. The fact that the bill enjoys the backing of the White House (as opposed to another version circulating in the House that adds provisions favoring national security) reveals what one Customs official has aptly termed "a massive disconnect between different agencies of the government." It also reveals a fundamental incoherence in the administration's own foreign policy.

Among the dual-use items now on the controlled list are high-precision electronic switches (known as "krytrons"), which release a powerful surge of electric current in a short, precisely controlled interval. These switches have a beneficent and almost miraculous civilian use: they trigger the machines that destroy kidney stones inside the body without surgery. They also have another use: setting off the chain reaction in thermonuclear weapons.

In 1998, Iraq (which is allowed to import medical equipment despite the UN embargo), tried to provide itself with a supply of these switches by purchasing a half-dozen of the machines that destroy kidney stones. The seller was Germany's electronic giant, Siemens, which graciously accepted the claim that Saddam Hussein was concerned about kidney stones in his subject population. Each Siemens machine required one switch. When Iraq tried to buy 120 additional switches as "spare parts," warning flags went up, but not quickly enough to prevent the shipment of at least some of them.

Under the bill, these switches would probably be decontrolled. The reason is that they fit the bill's definition of a "mass market" item—a new concept, invented by industry lobbyists, according to which it is impracticable to prevent any dual-use item that is freely available inside our borders from making its way outside. But the concept is flawed. For decades, these switches have been on the export-control list of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, a consortium of industrialized countries that includes virtually every switch manufacturer. The fact that Saddam Hussein had to engage in subterfuge to import the switches from Siemens shows that he could not get them any other way.

In addition to the switches, a number of other dangerous technologies could be decontrolled. One is the high-strength, "maraging" steel used to make solid rocket-motor cases and propellant tanks for missiles. This steel can also be used to form the critical moving parts of gas centrifuges that bring uranium up to nuclear-weapons grade. Other candidates for decontrol are corrosion-resistant valves, essential for regulating the gases inside plants that produce weapons-grade uranium. Both Iraq and Iran hope to build such plants and will need these valves in great number. They have been controlled for export since 1981.

There is no telling how many other items might be released. The glass and carbon fibers that go into rocket nozzles, the gyroscopes that help guide missiles, the isostatic presses that fashion rocket heat shields and nuclear-weapons parts, the vacuum furnaces that melt and cast uranium and plutonium, and the fermenters that grow biological agents—all of these products are sold in sufficient quantity in the United States to meet the bill's mass-market definition.

Under the bill, an item that meets the mass-market definition *must* be decontrolled by the Secretary of Commerce. He has no discretion in the matter. The only way an item can be kept on the controlled list is if the President reverses the Commerce Secretary's decision within 30 days, a task the bill forbids the President to delegate to others. Somehow, one cannot imagine the President and his staff plowing, month after month, through data on electronic switches, maraging steel, and corrosion-resistant valves.

The logic behind the mass-market concept is flawed both practically and morally. Congress is being asked to believe, without proof, that things that can be bought in quantity here are bound to leak across the border, making controls ineffective. As I have already shown, we have abundant historical evidence to the contrary.

Industry spokesmen also contend that since other countries sell at least some of the same things

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we do, our exporting companies are made to suffer an unfair disadvantage. It is true that the United States did not sell poison-gas plants to Libya or Iraq just because Germany did, or nuclear reactors to Pakistan because China did, or missiles to Iran because Russia did. Is that a policy to be ashamed of, let alone to think of reversing? Today, North Korea is selling—to Iran, Syria, Pakistan, and Libya—rocket technology far inferior to that which U.S. firms could supply. Should we rush to compete, and help bring those weapon programs up to speed?

The truth is that our companies, far from being at a disadvantage, have never had it so good. Since the end of the cold war, and thanks to the Clinton years, fewer and fewer items have been under control, and fewer and fewer applications for export licenses have had to be filed with the Commerce Department. Since 1989, both the number of applications and the value of goods controlled have decreased by approximately 90 percent. The value of the applications actually denied each year is only a few hundred million dollars, the equivalent of less than one-hundredth of 1 percent of the U.S. economy. In sum, export controls are only a shadow of what they were under COCOM. We are now being asked to get rid of the shadow.

The spread of weapons of mass destruction, the President has reminded us, is the foremost strategic threat facing the United States. These weapons are built mainly with dual-use equipment. If, as the White House seems to be urging, we reduce controls on the export of that equipment, we will not contain the threat; to the contrary, we will actively abet its growth.

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Uncle Jack

A Story

Joseph Epstein

Last Thursday, heading out from the Loop to my apartment in Hyde Park, I was listening to a golden-oldie station. They were playing a tape from famous radio programs, and one of them was from the old *Art Linkletter Show*. Linkletter is asking a little boy what he wants for Christmas, and the kid says he wants a new bed. Linkletter asks why. The kid says because he usually sleeps in the same bed with his mother, but now he has to sleep on the couch because his uncle is staying over with her, only you see, he isn't really his uncle. Roaring laughter. "Kids," the ever unctuous Linkletter signs off, "say the darnedest things."

I winced. Although I didn't grow up sharing a bed with my mother, I too had one of those uncles who wasn't really my uncle. Only *my* uncle, as I would learn, was one of the most powerful men in America. Not many people knew about him, but the small handful who did used to refer to him as Mr. Fix-It. The "it," as I was to discover when I grew older, covered a lot of territory.

My uncle could get the unions off your back, or get you a sweetheart contract, or get you a million-dollar loan out of union pension funds at an attractive interest rate at a time when a million dollars was a million dollars and not the salary of a utility infielder. He could get major zoning ordinances changed, or set in motion the gerrymandering of congressional districts. He could persuade all sorts of people in politics, show business, and sports not to be stubborn about deals and contracts. I heard it said—whispered, actually—that, should it be required, he was the man to see if you needed to have a business partner, or a wife or husband, removed in a quiet and completely efficient manner. Jack Rafter was my uncle's name.

I have no memory of my father. He went off to war in 1942 when I was two years old and died when I was five, shot down co-piloting a B-17 over Dresden in early 1945. A photograph of him in uniform, wearing his officer's hat in a fifty-mission crush, used to sit on the small mantle of our apartment on Pine Grove, off Addison. He is handsome and in the photograph looks very serious, though my mother told me that one of the things that originally attracted her was his sense of humor. Asked what he did for a living, he might answer, with a convincingly straight face, embalmer or safecracker or lion tamer. He was, in fact, an electrical engineer.

When I was a boy I used to fantasize that my father would return home happily recovered. He would take me to baseball games, teach me about electricity, instruct me in life's tricky spots, show me the ropes. I'm not sure which is worse, losing someone you've known and loved or losing someone you've never known at all. But I sorely missed not having a father, and even now, in my early sixties, I sometimes think I'm still not over it.

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Twenty-six when he died, my father left little in the way of savings or insurance. Like me, he had been an only child, and his parents, who were immigrants, were in no position to offer my mother much help. Her own father had died in his forties, and her mother, my grandmother, lived with a brother in San Francisco. Soon after getting her sad telegram from the War Department, my mother went to work at Rafter's, a high-line women's clothing shop on north Michigan Avenue.

Twenty-four years old, a redhead with a natural sense of style in clothes—"stunning" was how other women often described her—my mother quickly caught on. Lou Rafter and his wife Estelle, who were childless, took to her straight off, and soon included us in holiday parties at their large apartment on Lake Shore Drive near Temple Sholom. It was at one of these parties that my mother first met Lou Rafter's brother Jack. He lived on the "coast," as people in Chicago used to say, and he was a lawyer, but the kind of law he did was unclear. He was twelve years older than she.

"Jack walked into every room confident that he was the most important person there," my mother told me much later. "And the fact is, Billy, he was. Did I ever tell you that President Kennedy's father used to send him a case of Piper-Heidsieck every year at Christmas?"

I never learned how Jack Rafter had swept my mother away, but it's not hard to imagine. A man who was said to own four points of the Riviera Hotel in Vegas, large tracts of real estate in Boca Raton, and the land in San Diego on which the San Diego Padres built their stadium, a man who in a pinch could convince Jimmy Hoffa to call off the dogs—such a man could not have had much trouble convincing a war widow in her twenties, alone in the world with a young son, that he would watch out for her for the rest of her life. Which, after his fashion, and to give Uncle Jack his due, he did.

The problem was that when he met my mother, Jack Rafter was already married, with two daughters. He lived in Beverly Hills, and he wasn't the type to divorce or to abandon children, if only because divorce was much too sloppy for a man who instilled, maintained, and flourished in order. But evidently he did need a regular lady friend in Chicago, which he visited at least once and sometimes twice a month. He was a man working deals sixteen hours a day, his mind churning away full time—manipulating, maneuvering, figuring angles—and, although he could have had a different woman every night, he must have wanted company and stability of a different kind: the kind a woman as attractive and sensible as my young mother could supply.

In the early years, when their affair first began, I was shipped out to my mother's older sister, my Aunt Florence, and her husband Julius, who lived on Sheridan Road with Lake Michigan as their backyard. This was no hardship, especially since I liked their two sons, my cousins Eddy and Sherwin, who flanked me by a year on either side. I must have been eight years old when my cousin Eddy told me my mother had a boyfriend. Until that moment, I knew nothing about it. He said it was practically his mother and father's only topic of conversation.

When I confronted my mother, she said it was true she had a friend; she never used the word "boyfriend." Things were complicated, she said, and she would try to explain them to me, though not all at once. Her friend was the younger brother of Uncle Lou and Aunt Estelle (as I had long ago begun calling the Rafters) and lived in Los Angeles, but she saw him when he came to Chicago.

"Are you going to marry him?" I asked. In those days, I was still hoping to acquire a father.

"I don't think so, Billy."

"Then what's the point, Mom?"

"The point is that he's very nice and wants to help us."

"How?"

"You'll see," my mother said. "Mr. Rafter is a very important man."

"What does he do?"

"He's a lawyer," my mother said, "but his real work is to smooth the way for people who need special favors."

I have never forgotten my mother's formulation of Jack Rafter's life's work. As pure description, I still cannot better it. Nor can I forget my mild surprise the first time I entered the large office he kept in Chicago to find not a single law book in the place. So far as I know, he never appeared in court or handled a legal document.

I was nine by the time I first met him. The ordinariness of his appearance threw me. He was compact, 5'9" or so, trim, not more than 140 pounds. Over the nearly 40 years I would know him, his weight never changed. His shoes were always shined to a high brilliance, his nails were manicured, and his black hair, lightly pomaded and parted on the left, had that perfect kemptness that comes from getting a haircut every week. He exuded an expensive smell, good leather mixed with lemon. All his shirts had French cuffs, and once I noticed the U.S. presidential seal on his links. Years later I read a novel by Henry James in which the main male character was described as not overly concerned with clothes but careful to

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own no vulgar things; I thought at once of Uncle Jack.

"Billy," my mother said the day she introduced me, "this is my friend Mr. Rafter. He would like it if you called him Uncle Jack."

"I'd like it a lot, Billy," he said, smiling and putting a steadying hand on my shoulder. "I don't have any nephews or nieces, and I'd really like to think of you as my only nephew."

He said that he'd heard I was a sports fan and wondered if I'd go with him to a game. The day must have been a Sunday, in early or mid-September, because I still remember the choices: "We can go to Wrigley Field and watch Bob Waterfield and the Los Angeles Rams play the Bears, or we can go to Comiskey Park and watch Bob Feller pitch against the White Sox. Up to you, Billy."

I chose the Bears. We were driven there, only a few blocks away, in a dark blue Buick Roadmaster by a large black man named Greenwood. At the stadium Uncle Jack had seats on the forty-yard line, in a box five or six rows off the field.

"I want you to meet someone," he said once we were seated. He took my hand and we walked to the rail, where he called out, "Bob, Bobby, over here."

A tall deeply tanned man in a gold-and-blue uniform trotted over. "Jack," he said, "how goes it?"

"It goes well, Bobby," he said, shaking the man's hand. "Bob Waterfield, I want you to meet my nephew, Billy Siskind. Billy, this is the great Bob Waterfield, all-American quarterback of the Los Angeles Rams." I put out my hand, which was lost in his.

"Great to meet you, kid," he said, then signaled to the Rams bench where someone threw him a football. "Have a pen on you, Jack?" he asked. My new uncle took out a black Parker 51 with a gold cap. The ball was signed "To my friend Billy, best wishes, Bob Waterfield."

I still own that football—a Duke, the laces rising in high relief off its richly pebbled, deep brown leather—and the inscription and signature are still visible. Not long afterward, I learned that Bob Waterfield was married to Jane Russell, the actress whose low neckline in *The Outlaw* caused a great stir in the 1940's. Uncle Jack, as he used to put it, "represented" her. I may have been only nine years old, but I recognized even then that this new uncle of mine was no ordinary man.

Soon my mother and I had moved into a three-bedroom apartment on the ninth floor at 3300 N. Lake Shore Drive, with a swell view of Belmont Harbor from the French windows in our enormous living room. One bedroom was my mother's, one mine, and one was reserved for Uncle Jack. It contained a single bed, a desk, a phone with his private number, and a tall mahogany dresser. In the closet he kept two suits, both of lawyerly dark gray, and a beautiful maroon-colored silk robe and pajamas from Sulka along with slippers and an extra pair of shoes in trees. The desk drawers were locked, and I was instructed by my mother never to answer the phone, which usually only rang when he was in town.

Around the same time my mother acquired a sky-blue Chrysler convertible with real wood paneling and I was transferred out of Le Moyne, the public school where I had gone since kindergarten, and put in Francis Parker, a private school. My mother kept her job at Rafter's on Michigan Avenue.

Jack Rafter always went first-class, and as long as my mother was his special friend, so did we. But they seldom went out together in public. Like many beautiful women, my mother was an indifferent cook, so when Uncle Jack stayed over we either ordered in or ate at small and inconspicuous neighborhood restaurants. A couple of times he had his driver take us out to an Italian restaurant in Melrose Park called Slicker Sam's, where he was treated with almost regal regard and not allowed to pay his check. We never traveled as a family, but when my mother and I went anywhere he always saw to it that we had the best accommodations. He even arranged, through John Balaban, who ran the Balaban & Katz movie chain in Chicago, a free pass admitting two to all the chain's theaters. It had my name on it and made me a great figure among my classmates.

I always knew my mother was a great beauty. She stood 5'8", which in the high heels of the day made her taller than Jack. Her face resembled Susan Hayward's a little, with something of the same knowing intelligence the actress so successfully portrayed, but hers was warmer, less been-around-the-block. At what point I became aware of her real relationship with Uncle Jack I cannot say for certain. They were always highly discreet around me.

At the age of eleven, when I was sent off to a summer camp in Eagle River, Wisconsin, I learned the facts of life. No boy, I suppose, wishes to apply these facts to his own mother, and so long as there is a father on the premises he needn't really do so. But my mother's irregular connection with Jack Rafter put such matters all too squarely in the forefront of my consciousness. One of the few words absent from the otherwise nearly full sex lexicon I learned at Camp Ojibwa was "mistress," which of course is what my mother was.

One day Uncle Jack gave her a full-length mink coat, which in her excited pleasure she modeled for us the minute she took it out of the box. I shall nev-

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er forget the sound and the sight of the hem swishing and sweeping just above the floor, my mother's thick auburn hair doing something of the same almost six feet above. At that instant I had no trouble understanding why a man like Jack Rafter would go to such trouble to be with a woman like her. Perhaps that was also why I was less than shocked when, a year or two later, my mother first told me he had a wife and two daughters in Los Angeles whose lives he did not want to disrupt. One girl was fifteen, the other my age. "Very vulnerable ages for girls," my mother said.

So far as I knew, Uncle Jack did everything he could to spare my mother the awkwardness of her position. In all their years together, I never heard them quarrel. Each accepted the limitations imposed by the relationship. When I had my bar mitzvah, Uncle Jack came to the small but elegant party at the Drake Hotel that he no doubt paid for, but he didn't sit at the head or family table. On all holidays, Jewish or otherwise, his family in Los Angeles, it was understood, had first call on him. He took my mother to New York on a couple of occasions when I was growing up, but I never went along.

In high school I finally came into a more precise knowledge of Uncle Jack's position in the world. As best as I could piece together the story of his career, not long after graduating from Loyola Law School, Jack Rafter went to work for some of the Mafia-controlled unions in Chicago, the movie projectionists prominent among them. From there he had spread out in a three-pronged attack—you have to imagine here a Movietone News map of the Allied fronts during World War II—in which his reach extended from the Mafia and the unions to the entertainment industry itself. When the three overlapped, as when the "boys" took over Las Vegas, or when strikes were threatened in Hollywood, Uncle Jack was in a commanding position.

In those days people in Chicago talked about crime the way other people talked about sports. Everyone was an expert on the subject. Bugsy, Greasy Thumb, Big Tuna, in Chicago these were names that resonated like the Babe, Joltin' Joe, the Splendid Splinter. People used to wonder why Jack Rafter was never called up before the Kefauver Commission on organized crime—his name was mentioned on a number of occasions during the televised hearings. Another unanswered question was how, playing with the rough crowd he did, and at such a high-stakes game, he managed to avoid being killed.

Uncle Jack didn't travel with bodyguards, and as far as I know carried no gun. The closest I ever came to hearing him brag was when, staying in our apartment once recovering from a bad case of flu, he told me that he had to get back on his feet soon. "I owe it to people, some of them fairly important, who get nervous if I show up with even a light cold. One of the secrets of life, Billy, is to arrange things so that even to your bitterest enemies you're much more valuable alive than dead." This, too, though its meaning was a little unclear to me then, has stuck with me forever.

Although he was always attentive to my mother, and even set something of a model for how a gentleman ought to behave with a lady, Uncle Jack chose not to take the place of the father I had never known. With what I now regard as a species of high tact, he kept a restrained distance, somehow making it plain that, though we had no true blood ties, he would be there if I ever really needed him. He would occasionally take me along to a big sporting event—a heavyweight title fight, a crucial pro football game—but my allowance through high school came from my mother and so did all my disciplining and advice. I never mentioned Jack Rafter to any of my friends at high school, and those I brought home, if they hadn't heard otherwise, may have assumed that our money came from my mother's family.

Meanwhile, I was flourishing at Francis Parker, which I continued to attend all the way through high school. Everyone there was very bright; and so, I discovered, was I. I ran track, specializing in the grueling 440, and I found and fell in love with mathematics.

One night toward the end of my junior year Uncle Jack handed me a blank slip of paper and asked me to write down the names of the five colleges I most wanted to attend. I handed it back with the obvious names—Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Stanford, Chicago—and saw him tuck it into the pocket of his suit jacket. The following spring I received letters of acceptance from all five colleges.

It was a week or so later that Uncle Jack took me to the Cubs opener against the Cardinals. We sat in a box on the third-base line two rows behind the Cubs dugout. The day was cool, still in the low 50's. He was wearing a black coat, perfectly fitted, with a Chesterfield collar and a white silk scarf. His black hair was turning silver at the temples.

"You're mother is very proud of you," he said. "Getting into every school you applied for is no small thing, especially with the Jewish quotas that some of them have. Where are you thinking of going?"

"I was thinking Harvard," I said.

"I want to ask you a favor," he said. "I want you to go to the University of Chicago. Naturally I'll pick up the tab."

"Why Chicago?"

"Because it's close to home, and I don't want you to be too far from your mother. She needs you."

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"She told you that."

"She didn't have to, I can sense it. In the end, you know, you're all she's got."

"What about you?" I said, feeling that, as soon as the words were out of my mouth, I was sailing into dangerous water.

"Your mother is very dear to me. But for reasons I think you know about, Billy, I can't be with her all the time. I'm not asking you to be with her forever, but for now I think it best you be nearby."

"Can I think about it?"

"Of course," he said, "take all the time you need. But remember, I'd consider this a very big favor."

"Now can I ask you a question?" I said.

"Sure," he said, "anything you like."

"You didn't by any chance have anything to do with my college acceptances, did you?"

"Not a thing. If you'd needed me to intervene I would have been glad to help. But the fact is you didn't. You have my word on it."

"Have you ever done anything like that?"

"I'll tell you a story," he said. "A fellow in town here, a man in the appliance-parts business in Glenview named Meisels, called me one day to tell me that his son was on the waiting list at Northwestern Law School, and that he'd be grateful for anything I could do to get him accepted. I told him I'd look into it."

He paused to light a Dunhill out of a red and gold box. "I didn't feel there was much urgency about the matter, and anyway I had more pressing business to attend to. Three weeks later, the son was notified that a place had been found for him, and that same week the man sent me a check for $25,000."

"Did you keep it?" I asked.

"Of course. I didn't really have a choice. To return it would have been damaging to my reputation as a man of all-powerful influence," he said, smiling almost imperceptibly. "How about a hot dog?"

I LIVED at home for my first two years at Chicago, but for the second two my mother insisted that I take an apartment on campus. I sometimes thought with regret about Harvard, but in my senior year all such thoughts disappeared when I encountered a brilliant teacher, a slender and warm-hearted Argentinian named Alberto Calderone, whose mathematical specialty was wave theory. Taking me under his intellectual wing, Professor Calderone arranged a graduate fellowship, and I eventually went on to do my doctorate under him.

Uncle Jack was unable to attend my graduation. But a week later, I received a letter, on his office letterhead:

Dear Billy,

Congratulations on your undergraduate accomplishments, which have made your mother rightfully proud.

Four years ago, when I asked you to stay in Chicago for your education, I told you that I would consider this a significant favor, and I am a man who repays such favors. I would like you to know that my repayment is a small trust I have set up for you. It will provide you roughly $1,500 a month. This sum is not enough money, I hope, to smother your ambition or set you on the path to ruin, but something of a cushion and a comfort during your years of graduate study. The trust begins with the enclosed check. It is to endure for five years, after which I feel confident you will no longer need it.

I see I have neglected to add that your achievements have made me very proud also.

Sincerely,

Jack Rafter

The year was 1961, and it is perhaps a sign of Jack Rafter's personal wealth that he was unaware that the $18,000 annual income from this trust, peanuts to him, was four times a college instructor's salary of $4,500. The money, coming in more than handy, gave me independence, the means to travel every summer to Europe for long holidays, and that greatest of all freedoms, not having to think about money at all.

But by then Uncle Jack was staying in our apartment less and less frequently. How my mother felt about this was not known to me. Maybe she was relieved. Maybe she felt she was losing her grip. Here was this beautiful woman, Jack Rafter's girlfriend, approaching her mid-forties, getting a little old for the job and perhaps beginning to feel it. I wonder if she worried about his looking for—or having already found—another woman, a younger version of herself, tucked away in Manhattan or even in Chicago.

One night not long before I finished graduate school, I brought in Chinese food and my mother and I shared not one but two bottles of the fruity, slightly sweet Riesling wine she favored. As we worked our way through the second bottle, I found the courage to bring up *the* subject.

"Mother," I asked, "was Uncle Jack a mistake?"

"Whatever do you mean?" she said.

"I mean your friendship with him made it impossible for you to find another husband."

"Uncle Jack and I made a bargain, and he's kept it to the letter. I knew at the outset what I could expect from him and what I couldn't. I have no complaints, Billy, I want you to know that."

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"Do you love him, Mother?"

"I've loved only two men in my life, your father and you. But I have the greatest regard for Jack. He's made it possible for us to live as we do. We were alone in the world before he came along."

"Did you do it for me?"

"If I said yes I'd be a heroine, wouldn't I? The truth is I did it only partly for you. I did it for myself, too. Jack isn't exactly charmless, you know. And his power in the world has its attractions, even if I share in it in only a very small way."

"If it were possible, would you prefer to be married to him?"

"I hope this doesn't shock you, Billy, but I don't think I would ever care to have been married to Jack Rafter." And here she paused. "He cheats on his wife, you know," she said, finishing the little bit of wine left in her glass.

Just then the phone rang. My Aunt Florence, a famous gabber, kept my mother on the line for 25 minutes as I cleared the table and washed the dishes. We never returned to the subject.

The blessed Professor Calderone arranged a job for me in the university's math department, and six years later I got tenure. In the same year I married another mathematician, which turned out to be a mistake: it lasted three years, with no children and no great recriminations afterward. It was shortly after my divorce that my mother began to get dizzy spells.

At first she thought it might be diabetes, which ran in her family, but when she proved negative for that they put her through the full buffet of tests and discovered cancer of the liver. It had metastasized from the pancreas, and the prognosis was not good. With chemotherapy, she was told, she could live two, maybe two-and-a-half years. She had not yet turned sixty.

When Uncle Jack found out he insisted she go to Mayo for a second opinion. We went, more to accommodate him than for reassurance. With Jack Rafter as our sponsor, the red carpet was set out, but in the end the verdict and the sentence were the same: liver cancer, two to three years to live if treated chemically.

My mother, usually so wonderfully in control, somehow saw her cancer as a judgment—and one she didn't quite understand. "Billy," she would say to me over and over, "did you ever think this would happen to me?" "Mother," I more than once replied, "it can happen to anybody. In a way it has nothing to do with you." But after a while I stopped saying such things, realizing that I was, in effect, asking her not to take her death personally.

Uncle Jack told me not to worry about expenses. Anything my mother wanted, she was to have. The problem was that there was nothing she really wanted but to be well again. He called nearly every night, asking how she felt, giving her what I took to be little pep talks that did absolutely no good. Not even the great fixer could fix this one.

Then one afternoon, when I had come to take her shopping for groceries, she called out from the kitchen:

"Billy, come back here, please. There's something I want to show you."

She was seated at the counter. She had been losing weight, and the chemo had caused her skin and hair to lose their luster. I was grateful she hadn't yet lost her hair altogether. In her beautiful eyes was that slightly terrorized look of people with terminal cancer.

She pushed a copy of the *Sun-Times* across the counter, turned to the page with Kup's Column. "Look at the last item but one," she said.

In bold type I read Jack Rafter's name. The item read: "Influential West Coast attorney **Jack Rafter** in town for re-opening of Mr. Kelly's."

When I looked up, my mother said: "He called, as usual, but he never told me he was in Chicago."

"What does it mean?"

"It means your Uncle Jack doesn't like losers," she said, seeming oddly unmoved.

I was in my mother's apartment the next night when he called, heard her respond to his questions about her health, heard her ask about his own. She gave no hint that she knew he'd been in town.

Of course she was aware that she was dying. One Tuesday morning, after helping her into the front seat of my Volvo to take her to chemo, I reminded her to put on her seatbelt. She shot me a look suggesting I had made a joke in extremely dubious taste. On the short ride to the hospital, a barely perceptible groaning sound was mixed with her regular breathing. We seemed, my mother and I, to have run out of things to talk about.

"It won't be long now," she said after she had grown so weak she had to be hospitalized. And it wasn't. I sat by her bedside at Weiss Hospital, held her ringless fingers in my hand, listened to the moaning that accompanied her breathing. My beautiful mother, I thought, I will not remember you in this terrible condition. I will remember you in your natural elegance, and I will always remember that you were the one person in this life on whom I could count.

She died on a Saturday night, which meant that Jack Rafter probably wouldn't get word till Monday: I didn't have his home number, and anyway it wouldn't be right to try him there. Instead I left a message on his office answering machine.

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He called back Monday morning at ten, Chicago time.

"Billy, I can't tell you how sorry I am. It's a great loss"—he paused—"for both of us." There was something, I thought, ever so slightly perfunctory about his voice, as if he had already filed the subject away in a folder and placed the folder in an outbox.

The funeral service and burial were scheduled for the next day. He said he hoped I would understand that he couldn't attend. "Lots of complications involved."

"I understand," I said.

"If you need help with any of the bills, please send them to me."

"No help needed," I said.

"Perhaps we can meet in a couple of weeks. There are a few items in my desk at your mother's apartment that I need to clean out."

WHEN HE stepped off the elevator, Uncle Jack seemed smaller than I'd remembered him—age, perhaps, although age certainly didn't detract from his standard, understated stylishness. He was wearing a dark gray hat—men of his generation didn't go out without a hat—and one of his perfectly fitted black suits, with a lush, solid silver-hued necktie. He was carrying a plain black leather briefcase. At seventy-three or so, he was still very much in the game.

We shook hands. Looking down, I noted that he still had the benefit of a manicure. "You holding up okay?" he asked.

"I'm okay," I said. "How about you?"

"Being in this apartment shakes me up a little," he said. "Your mother's death marks a major subtraction in my life."

I wondered. Jack Rafter was a man who never said anything that he hadn't carefully weighed, calculating its effects, side-effects, and possible after-effects ten years down the road.

"Sorry to burden you with this," he said, after emerging from his old bedroom, "but I've left a couple of suits and some shoes in the closet. No hurry, but when you get a chance you could maybe send them to me at my LA office. Bill me for the cost."

"I'll do it in a day or so," I said. I tried to imagine him leaving this apartment carrying his shoes and with his clothes over his arm, but I couldn't do it. Other people carried things for Jack Rafter.

"Well, kid, what can I say? Life goes on. Let's be grateful for your mother's existence."

"Look," I found myself saying, "there's something I have to know before you leave. What exactly did my mother mean to you?"

"She was a charming and beautiful woman," he said, "and I cared very deeply for her."

"Do you have another woman in Chicago lined up to take her place?"

"A little out of line, don't you think, Billy?"

"Maybe it is, but who drew the damn lines in the first place?"

"Your mother and I had a deal, and we both lived up to it."

"Strange kind of deal," I said.

"Your mother knew everything it entailed, down to the fine print. She never complained. Which is apparently more than can be said for you—though you also benefited considerably from our little arrangement."

"Little for you, maybe," I said. "For my mother it was her whole life."

"What exactly do you want, Billy?"

"I want you to tell me that my mother wasn't your whore."

"I never thought of her that way, I assure you."

"Then how did you think of her?"

"I've already told you, as a charming and beautiful woman who meant a great deal to me."

"A great deal sounds right, but then you're the world's premier maker of great deals, isn't that so, Uncle Jack."

"If taking a few shots at me will make you feel better, please, be my guest."

"Was my mother ever anything more to you than a convenience, a place to hang your goddamn Sulka robe?"

"If I said yes, would you believe me, Billy? Forgive me if I doubt it. I wonder if something else isn't at work here."

"Like what?"

"Like resentment. Some of us have tried to shape the world to accommodate our desires. You either dominate life or you're dominated by it. Don't know if that information is available to a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago."

He glanced at his watch. "My driver is waiting," he said. "I'd better get a move on."

"We probably won't see each other again," I said.

"Probably not." He put out his hand. "Good luck, Billy."

"You, too," I said, deciding, what the hell, to shake his hand.

I walked him out to the elevator. As he got in, and the door began to close, I glimpsed him standing there alone, ever so briefly, smiling, for some reason, to himself. The son of a bitch, I thought, he's probably working out the details of a deal with God, with a small but decisive advantage to himself.

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How Inept Is the FBI?

Gabriel Schoenfeld

TWO NARRATIVES stand in mutual contradiction. In one of them, Wen Ho Lee, a computer scientist at Los Alamos National Laboratory, is what the *New York Times* called him in June 1999: a man possibly "responsible for the most damaging espionage of the post-cold-war era," and almost certainly guilty of providing the nation's most precious secrets to Communist China. In the other, he is what the same *New York Times* called him a year later in an extraordinary editorial note: the victim of a "witch hunt."

Which narrative, if either, is true, or at least more plausible? The question is caught up in a thicket of hot-button issues: racial profiling, journalistic conduct and misconduct, prosecutorial tactics, political ambition, Chinese strategy, and the secret workings of U.S. law-enforcement agencies. But most of the facts are now in the public domain, and two new books about the case—including one by Wen Ho Lee himself—enable us to reach some tentative judgments.* What makes the opportunity timely is this: the entire episode sheds a great deal of light on how a major agency of our government grappled with national-security lapses in the decade before September 11.

Many of the essentials of the story are not in dispute. In the early 1990's, U.S. counterintelligence officials began to suspect that the People's Republic of China (PRC) had acquired top-secret information about the W-88, a highly compact nuclear warhead of the kind that made possible the mounting of multiple independently targeted reentry vehicles (MIRV's)—i.e., numerous warheads on a single rocket. China now has only twenty intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of reaching the U.S., and each of these missiles is able to carry only a single warhead; thus, the acquisition of MIRV technology would have enabled the Chinese to make a great leap forward in their offensive nuclear capacity, with profound consequences for the balance of power in Asia and the world.

The evidence suggesting espionage was of two kinds. First, in 1992, the PRC tested a nuclear device dramatically smaller than anything previously known to be in its possession; given how difficult it is to design and manufacture a miniaturized warhead, this raised fears that advanced U.S. technology had leaked. Second, and greatly amplifying worries about a security lapse, in 1995 a walk-in defector purporting to be a PRC missile expert delivered a stack of weapon-design plans, including drawings of the W-88, to Taiwanese intelligence.

In short order, a full-fledged hunt for a spy was set in motion by officials at the Department of Energy (DOE), the agency that oversees the U.S nuclear arsenal, working jointly with the Central In-

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* *A Convenient Spy: Wen Ho Lee and the Politics of Nuclear Espionage* by Dan Stober and Ian Hoffman. Simon & Schuster, 384 pp., $26.00. *My Country Versus Me* by Wen Ho Lee (with Helen Zia). Hyperion, 332 pp., $23.95.

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telligence Agency (CIA), the Justice Department (DOJ), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). For reasons that remain a subject of intense controversy, suspicion fell on Wen Ho Lee.

A TAIWAN-BORN computer scientist who acquired U.S. citizenship in 1974, Lee was working in the highly classified X, or theoretical, division at Los Alamos, one of three national laboratories (along with Sandia and Lawrence Livermore) where nuclear weapons are designed, tested, manufactured, and maintained. In 1994, Lee was observed embracing a leading Chinese weapon designer who was visiting Los Alamos. This raised questions about how they had become acquainted. In short order an FBI investigation was launched, but it proceeded desultorily and after several years had arrived at a standstill. (I shall return to this below.) Then, in early 1999, the spy-hunters suddenly struck what looked like a vein of gold: Lee, it seems, had embarked on a multi-year effort to download the entire collection of computer codes used to model the effects of test explosions of U.S. nuclear weapons, moving them from the secure computer system on which they were housed to unclassified computers and then onto portable cassette tapes.

Not long after this astonishing find, word that a spy had been uncovered at Los Alamos was fed to the press, and in March 1999, the *New York Times* published dramatic revelations alleging that an (as yet unnamed) employee at the lab had done immense damage to national security. Lee, now aware that he was under suspicion, entered secure areas of the Los Alamos lab under false pretenses and succeeded in deleting some, but only some, of the sensitive files he had illicitly copied.

In the final weeks before he was picked up, rotating teams of FBI agents shadowed his every move. So did the media, which staked out his home around the clock. Finally, on December 10, 1999, Lee was arrested and charged with 59 separate criminal acts, 39 of which carried a life sentence for espionage and violations of the Atomic Energy Act. Denied bail as someone at risk of fleeing, he was placed in solitary confinement in a Sante Fe maximum-security prison. To block any further possible communication with Chinese spy-masters, he was subjected to the most stringent conditions under which a prisoner can be held in a U.S. jail; among other precautions, his feet were manacled for long stretches and a chain connected his hands to a belt. The physical restraints, though, were the least of his worries, for the government also appeared to have an airtight case against him. His transgressions seemed to be deliberate, blatant, prolonged, and shockingly extensive.

But the day of Wen Ho Lee's arrest also proved to be the high point for the spy-catchers, and from then on it was all downhill. Adamantly and consistently denying that he had ever committed espionage, Lee recruited a team of top-flight lawyers who set to work mastering the arcana of nuclear-weapons codes and the security restrictions governing them. His daughter Alberta traveled the country, rallying audiences to her father's defense. A public-relations firm was signed up by Lee's lawyers to help sway elite and popular opinion. Ambiguities and anomalies in the government's allegations began to gain a hearing in the press. The editorial pages of the nation's newspapers, at first sharply against Lee, began to shift.

By the time Lee's trial was set to commence a year later, the government's case had almost completely collapsed. The whole affair ended in a plea bargain. Lee confessed to a single count of violating security procedures and accepted his punishment—a slap on the wrist that was grossly disproportionate to the grave charges he had faced and that made a mockery of the draconian conditions of his pretrial imprisonment. He was sentenced by the court to time already served, 278 days. From the bench, the presiding judge, James Parker, issued an extraordinary apology:

> I believe you were terribly wronged by being held in custody pretrial in the Santa Fe County Detention Center under demeaning, unnecessarily punitive conditions. I am truly sorry that I was led by our executive branch of government to order your detention last December. . . .
>
> The top decision-makers in the executive branch, especially the Department of Justice and the Department of Energy and locally . . . have caused embarrassment by the way this case began and was handled. They did not embarrass me alone. They have embarrassed our entire nation and each of us who is a citizen.

What had happened to produce this thoroughly unexpected result? Even today, with the wealth of information on the table, a definitive answer remains elusive, though at least some subsidiary matters can be wrapped up with assurance. One of them, which became highly contentious over the course of the affair, is the issue of racial profiling.

A number of activists and Asian-American defense organizations continue to allege that, from beginning to end, the investigation of Wen Ho Lee was driven by racism. This accusation has been voiced loudest of all by Lee himself. In *My Country Versus*

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Me, an exceptionally persuasive (and at key junctures exceptionally deceitful) book, Lee paints himself as a selfless, hardworking, and entirely guiltless immigrant who loyally served the national-security establishment of his adopted land for decades. A number of commonplace security infractions, he writes, were misinterpreted in a climate in which virulent anti-Chinese sentiment was on the ascent, "articles and talk shows banged the drum against the insidious spying techniques of China," and the press, already replete with "derogatory" references to Chinese people, "characterized Chinese-Americans as potential, and easy, espionage targets."

An exhaustive review of the evidence bearing on this particular charge can be found in the Bellows Commission report, an authoritative, four-volume post-mortem of the entire Wen Ho Lee fiasco released by the Justice Department in December 2001. (Bellows is Randy Bellows, an assistant U.S. attorney who headed the commission.) The report itself is stamped "top secret" and is available to the public only in heavily redacted form.* But the unexpurgated portions make several things clear, and among them is the place of ethnic or racial profiling in the investigation.

Very early in the inquiry into the feared loss of the W-88, a DOE investigator drew up an investigative plan that stated, in part: "An initial consideration will be to identify those U.S. citizens, of Chinese heritage, who worked directly or peripherally with the design development" of the warhead. Such a method, the document noted, "is a logical starting point based upon the intelligence community's evaluation that the PRC targets and utilizes ethnic Chinese for espionage rather than persons of non-Chinese origin."

There could hardly be clearer evidence of an intention to conduct racial profiling. But the matter is not so simple. For one thing, if PRC intelligence does in fact single out Chinese-Americans for recruitment—as seems to be the case—U.S. officials who failed to take this into account would be grossly remiss in their duty. But, for another thing, racial profiling was almost wholly absent in the Wen Ho Lee affair. The Bellows commission uncovered no evidence whatsoever that the espionage inquiry ever proceeded in the manner proposed by the DOE investigator, and no officials from the Energy Department or any other arm of the federal government ever drew up any sort of list of U.S. citizens of "Chinese heritage." Even more significantly, Wen Ho Lee's name surfaced in the spy hunt—repeatedly—for reasons entirely unconnected to his national origin.

Nearly a decade before the W-88 became an object of concern, Wen Ho Lee's conduct had attracted the attention of the FBI. In 1982, he had placed a telephone call to another Chinese-American scientist at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory who was himself under suspicion for betraying nuclear secrets and whose telephone was then being tapped by the FBI. Questioned a year later about the call, Lee denied knowing the other man, let alone ever having had any contact with him. Only when confronted with documentary evidence did he acknowledge his lie to the FBI.

Though Lee's behavior led to an investigation, he passed a polygraph exam and agreed to assist the FBI in its investigation of the other scientist. He lost neither his position nor his security clearance and suffered no further repercussions of any sort. Still, a counterintelligence file had been created under his name, which made it entirely natural that in any new investigation of a security breach at Los Alamos, especially one of this gravity, old dossiers would be exhumed and previous findings would be juxtaposed to fresh information.

That is precisely what happened. Lee's past and present behavior was now subjected to close scrutiny; even before investigators learned about the downloaded nuclear codes, what they uncovered was disturbing enough. It seems that on a lab-approved visit to the PRC, Lee had met with leading Chinese nuclear-weapon designers, two of whom had even come to his hotel room and asked detailed questions about the detonation mechanisms of U.S. nuclear bombs. Upon his return home, Lee had failed to say a word about this extraordinary encounter in his official trip report—which at the very least was a serious violation of regulations. (One of his hotel visitors was later a participant in the 1994 "hug" incident, as the FBI called it.)

What was he up to? Why had he secretly met with Chinese weapon designers in a Beijing hotel room, and to what end did he (as it later emerged) download a complete collection of the government's most sensitive nuclear files? If this was not espionage—the loss of the downloaded files, according to one government official, represented "the gravest possible security risk to the United States"—what was it?

Astonishingly enough, on this particular point the government's case turned out to be appallingly thin. As Lee's attorneys discovered to their delight, the software in question, despite its alleged sensi-

* The partially declassified version is available at www.usdoj.gov/ag/readingroom/bellows.htm.

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tivity, had not been classified as secret by the DOE until *after* Lee was indicted. Up to that juncture, it bore the mark PARD—"protect as restricted data"—a low-level security designation devised to cover huge collections of *un*classified information that might possibly contain classified fragments. With this revelation, in one fell swoop, the prosecution suffered a devastating blow.

For another thing, as Dan Stober and Ian Hoffman emphasize in *A Convenient Spy*, their instructive if sometimes overheated account of the case, some (though not all) of Lee's fellow scientists were very skeptical of the usefulness of the downloaded files to a foreign adversary. Among its various flaws, the software was said to be replete with bugs that caused it to crash, to "deliver bad answers," or "to predict bombs would work that wouldn't." As Judge Parker declared at Wen Ho Lee's bail proceedings, "I am confronted with radically divergent opinions expressed by several distinguished United States nuclear-weapons scientists who are on opposite sides of the issue of the importance of the information Dr. Lee took."

Even if we assume the worst—namely, that the codes were vital to U.S. national security—the prosecution had nothing beyond circumstantial evidence that Wen Ho Lee ever transferred them to any unauthorized person. If it had come down to a trial, a jury, on the basis of reasonable doubt as to whether the scientist had betrayed his country, would have been forced to acquit.

In *My Country Versus Me*, Lee offers his own "very simple and mundane" explanation for why he downloaded the codes and transferred them to cassette tapes. He was doing nothing more, he writes, than backing up his work out of concern that the lab might change its computer operating system or that the system itself would crash and erase his data, rendering useless years of his own toil. He knew it "wasn't proper," but such practices were widespread and "before me, no one was ever fired for this," let alone "arrested, thrown in jail, placed in solitary confinement for nine months, and accused of espionage."

As for erasing files on the eve of his arrest, he did this, he asserts, openly and with no intention of covering his tracks. He had been stripped of his security clearance and was anxious to relinquish possession of all classified documents under his control. To this end, he even asked the people at the lab's computer-assistance desk for "instructions on how to delete the files," and they cheerfully obliged, just as they had done when he sought assistance in making the unauthorized copies in the first place.

Lee also has an explanation, almost as benign, for his failure to report his meeting with Chinese weapon designers in a Beijing hotel room. At that meeting, he writes, he declined to answer the questions about U.S. warheads posed to him by his visitors, and no secrets were betrayed. The reason he did not report the episode was that he feared another investigation of the kind to which he had been subjected in 1983. His behavior may have been unethical, even a criminal violation of security regulations, but it did not amount to espionage.

Indeed, as Lee is at pains to stress in his book, the FBI only learned about the hotel meeting because he himself voluntarily told them about it in a 1998 interview at which he waived his right to have an attorney present—hardly the actions of a guilty man.

> I told everything I could think of, so that any doubts about me could be cleared. Little did I realize that . . . the fact that I hadn't mentioned it earlier became the "proof" of my suspected espionage activity. Officials at the lab, the FBI, the DOJ, the DOE, politicians in Congress, and the media would later cite my recollections of this 1988 incident as evidence that I was deceptive, a liar, and therefore a probable spy.

LEE'S EXPLANATION for his conduct in Beijing, for his unauthorized downloads, and for everything else he did that was strange and suspicious is less than utterly convincing. Especially feeble is his claim to suffer from periodic "memory loss," an argument he invokes to cover some of his most perplexing actions, including the outright falsehoods he told to security officials. Yet even this is not to dismiss the possibility of his innocence: there is a considerable gulf between being a liar, which Lee certainly is, and being a spy and a traitor.

Stringent security regulations of the kind in place at Los Alamos are not only burdensome but also frequently sidestepped or ignored. In such an environment, behavior that might otherwise be regarded as an ordinary human foible can easily be misperceived as sinister. Carelessness or negligence conjoined with a couple of unlucky coincidences can land one in the deepest trouble. A compelling fact is that while Wen Ho Lee was sitting in leg irons awaiting trial on charges that could have deprived him of freedom for the rest of his life, the man appointed by Bill Clinton to run the CIA, John M. Deutch, was using a personal computer hooked up to the Internet from his home to work on documents bearing classifications at least as sen-

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sitive as anything ever mishandled by Wen Ho Lee. For this abuse, Deutch, who never sat in jail for even a day, was pardoned on January 20, 2001, just two hours before Clinton's term expired.

Although Wen Ho Lee did many things that looked like espionage, he also did quite a few things that seem uncharacteristic of a determined spy. Amassing a huge collection of classified data (with file names spelling out the exact contents) and retaining this collection for *years* on a government computer do not exactly fit the profile of a carefully instructed agent. Neither does hugging one of your supposed espionage contacts in front of a roomful of colleagues. There is also the impression left by Lee under interrogation, which is of a stammering and often desperate-sounding man. Threatened with the electric chair by FBI agents bent on extracting a confession, Lee did not waver in the least from his protestation of innocence. (He reproduces several of these sessions in his book.) Clever spies can of course disguise culpability convincingly, and Wen Ho Lee, as I have suggested, is fully capable of telling bald-faced lies. But, taken all in all, it is hard to believe that he was a spy.

What Wen Ho Lee was really up to is thus ultimately a mystery to which there are as yet no satisfying solutions. In *A Convenient Spy*, Stober and Hoffman weigh the various hypotheses and settle on a wholly quotidian speculation: that he was afraid of losing his job at the lab—he had been warned of layoffs in 1993, the year he began making the tapes. Since, by all accounts (other than his own), he was a mediocre scientist, he believed that the information contained on the cassettes would be immensely helpful in a new job, allowing him rapidly to solve all sorts of complex problems in his field and making him "appear more talented to a potential employer" than he actually was. Stober and Hoffman's guess seems as good as any, and I am inclined to accept it—while acknowledging, as they do, that there is ample room for darker interpretations of the kind that landed the scientist in so much trouble.*

If Lee's motives represent an enigma, a much more difficult subject is the U.S. government's—and especially the FBI's—handling of the case. And it is here that the Lee affair rises from being a mere curiosity in the annals of espionage into a telling indicator of the parlous state of our domestic security arrangements in the period leading up to September 11.

While the Wen Ho Lee case was active, it was widely regarded within the government as the gravest national-security breach to confront our country in a decade or more. At issue, after all, were weapons that can incinerate millions of people in one blow. Yet despite the immense stakes, the investigation was handled worse than poorly. What went wrong, and why?

Part of the problem unquestionably stemmed from the vicissitudes of Washington politics during the Clinton administration. Reports that the Democratic party had accepted funds from Chinese-government sources at the very moment the administration was relaxing controls on the export of sensitive technology to China had already touched off an uproar. When word of a security breach at Los Alamos surfaced amid a wave of thematically related scandals, and with the impeachment of the President unfolding, members of the cabinet acted to bypass the normal safeguards against the abuse of executive authority.

After first letting the case languish, Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, Attorney General Janet Reno, and FBI Director Louis Freeh shifted gears. Each of them handled a different aspect of the case, but each took a pivotal part both in inflating the charges against Wen Ho Lee and then having him imprisoned under conditions whose harshness was designed to elicit a supporting admission of guilt that never came. The *New York Times* was thus

* The evidence that Wen Ho Lee compromised the W-88, it should be noted, is exceedingly weak, and indeed there was no mention of the warhead in any of the 59 counts under which he was indicted. Suspicion of him, at this point, can only properly focus on his handling of the tapes—which is a separate issue from the loss of the warhead design.

For a view of Wen Ho Lee at odds with mine, see the review by Notra Trulock III of the two recent books on the case in the April 8, 2002 issue of the *Weekly Standard*. Trulock himself, now retired from government, was a leading participant in the affair, having served as a senior security official at the DOE throughout the investigation's most crucial chapters. In the *Weekly Standard*, he asserts that "if the investigation began again today, Wen Ho Lee would still be a prime suspect."

There is reason to doubt this assertion, as well as to question Trulock's disinterestedness in the matter. As chief of intelligence at the DOE, he was largely responsible for a 1996 report that later prompted the FBI to launch its full-scale inquiry into Wen Ho Lee. But, according to the Bellows commission, he also appears to have derailed the case from the start. Among the notable flaws singled out by the Bellows commission was the "very foundation" of the DOE investigation itself—i.e., the conception that the W-88 had definitely been compromised by espionage. It seems that nuclear experts summoned to Washington by the DOE had expressed serious doubts on this score, but their statement was suppressed by Trulock; instead, the Bellows commission finds, "blatantly inaccurate" information was imparted to the FBI, leading it to focus almost exclusively on Wen Ho Lee, and to ignore hundreds if not thousands of other potential suspects, in a crime that may not have occurred in the first place. One wishes that, in his essay in the *Weekly Standard*, Trulock had opted to rebut, or even to acknowledge, the charges directed at him in the Bellows report.

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right to say that Wen Ho Lee became the target of a "witch hunt," but it was a hunt conducted not by right-wing anti-Communist zealots (as this language suggests) but by liberals seeking cover from artillery shells they had fired at themselves.

In this witch hunt, the *New York Times* itself played a leading role. At critical moments, the newspaper published slanted and highly inflammatory reports that simultaneously upended the investigation and served to intensify the pressure to arrest and prosecute Wen Ho Lee on untenable charges. "Passages of some articles," the *Times*'s editors would eventually and euphemistically concede in the editorial note I referred to earlier, "posed a problem of tone."

THE PECCADILLOES of the Clinton administration are familiar enough, but they have also receded into the past. All too familiar, as well, are the axes ground by the *Times*. The real story, very much with us still today, is of the government's permanent investigative bureaucracy, where the record in the case of Wen Ho Lee was one of blunder piled upon blunder into a mountain of incompetence.

Only a small sampling of the mishaps treated at length in the Bellows Commission report can be recounted here. As I have noted, Lee was caught lying to the FBI about a national-security issue as far back as 1983, in a case involving the suspected theft of nuclear secrets. Such behavior might be thought grounds for instant dismissal. But his conduct was downplayed by the FBI because he subsequently appeared to be telling the truth while hooked up to a polygraph machine—a device in which the Bureau (along with the CIA and other government agencies) continues to place inordinate confidence despite repeated instances in which traitors have defeated it.

In this particular instance, thanks either to Lee's truthfulness or to his ability to overcome the device, he managed to pass an exam in which he was directly asked if he was a spy. Thus, the Los Alamos laboratory was never properly informed about the deeply suspicious lies he *had* told while *not* being polygraphed. If it had been, Lee's security clearance might well have been revoked and with it his prospects for further employment in classified defense work. The Wen Ho Lee story would have ended before it began.

An even more consequential and less comprehensible bungle came a decade or so later, well before the uncovering of Lee's illicit downloading of the nation's nuclear "crown jewels" but just as he was emerging as a suspect in the loss of the W-88. It was then that the FBI entered into a battle with the Justice Department over a search warrant to examine the contents of Lee's office computer. The Justice Department did not find probable cause to issue such a warrant, and repeatedly turned down the FBI's application until the Bureau tired of asking.

What the FBI agents did not know and did not learn was that, like every other employee of the government-run lab, and *like themselves*, Wen Ho Lee had agreed to unfettered and surreptitious monitoring of his computer as a condition of employment. Several years elapsed as FBI agents in the field and at headquarters attempted fruitlessly to untangle a knot tied entirely by their own cloddishness, years in which Lee completed his collection of tapes. This, the Bellows report concludes, was "a failure of incalculable and potentially catastrophic significance."

Inability to examine Lee's computer was hardly the only reason for the unhurried tempo of the investigation. From beginning to end, the FBI leadership in Washington, though well aware of the ramifications of the case, allocated almost no resources to it, being far more preoccupied with the politically perilous task of investigating Chinese campaign contributions to the Democratic party. This meant that for extended spells, only solitary agents were responsible for the entire W-88 investigation, and these were not the best and brightest in an agency that has never been accused of having a thinking man's approach to law enforcement.

One of the special agents running the show for a period of time was known for being (according to his personnel records) not only "meticulous and methodical" but also "very, very slow." At another point, the case was handed over to someone grudgingly characterized by his supervisor as "not the worst agent" he had worked with over the course of his career. For one critical four-year interlude, the Bellows report informs us, the investigation "proceeded at a pace that can only be described as languid, if not torpid, and that pace was itself periodically disrupted by dead-stop-in-the-water delays that, in an important counterintelligence investigation, can only be characterized as maddening and inexplicable."

The Bellows commission has other choice words for the FBI's investigation. It was "deeply and fundamentally flawed" in "virtually every material respect." It was "a paradigm of how not to manage and work an important counterintelligence case." For years, the case "suffered from neglect, faulty judgment, bad personnel choices, inept investigation, and the inadequate supervision of that inept investigation, nearly nonexistent follow-up, faulty

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communication between DOE and the FBI and between FBI-HQ [headquarters] and FBI-AQ [Albuquerque], and a consistent failure to recognize or appreciate the gravity of the case."

A sorry tale indeed. Is there an indirect link, one inevitably wonders, between it and another recent case, that of Robert Philip Hanssen, the FBI agent who was arrested in 2001 as a highly productive mole for Soviet/Russian intelligence? For years, it turned out, Hanssen had been posting pornographic stories about his wife on the Internet. He had also taken a deep interest in a stripper whom he had met at a topless bar a few blocks north of FBI headquarters, escorted on a tour of the FBI training center in Quantico, Virginia, taken on a two-week holiday to Hong Kong, and brought to his church in an unsuccessful effort to turn her into a devout Catholic.

This bizarre individual, we are asked to believe, did not stand out at all at the Bureau; indeed, he fit in so well that the was repeatedly promoted and rewarded until he became a ranking supervisor in its division of Russian counterintelligence. Yet as far back as 1990, we learn from a recent book about the case by the *Washington Post* reporter David A. Vise,* Hanssen's brother-in-law, himself an FBI agent, had grown suspicious and informed his superiors that Hanssen had a lot of unexplained extra cash on hand; he also told them of his belief that Hanssen was spying for Moscow. At that juncture, the FBI could easily have apprehended Hanssen, writes Vise, "by carrying out a standard probe involving physical and electronic surveillance." Instead, it did nothing. Hanssen continued in place, feeding secrets to Moscow for another ten years. His true motivation for conducting espionage, as he later explained it, was not a thirst for money but "rage"—evidently entirely justified—at the glaring incompetence of the FBI itself.

Following hard on the heels of the Wen Ho Lee debacle, surely the Hanssen fiasco should have led to a major revamping of the agency. It did not. Learning nothing and forgetting nothing, the Bureau largely confined itself to initiating regular polygraph examinations (!) of its senior officials.

And what, finally, about the FBI's handling of the case of Zacarias Moussaoui, the man charged with being the 20th hijacker on September 11? On August 16, recall, Moussaoui had been detained on immigration charges after the Bureau was tipped off by a Minnesota flight school that he was eagerly studying how to fly a Boeing 747—but not how to take off or land. The FBI also obtained Moussaoui's laptop computer, and its field agents in Minnesota, deeply worried that some sort of terrorist hijacking was being planned, urgently sought a search warrant to examine the contents. But in a resounding echo of the Los Alamos investigation, they were turned down—in this instance not by the Justice Department but by their own superiors. According to the *Washington Post*, "during often heated debates from August 18 to 20, officials at headquarters opposed the request, arguing that investigators could not show probable cause that a crime had been committed."

In the last analysis, what the Wen Ho Lee case and the Hanssen case and the events of September 11 all teach us is that the FBI may be excellent at apprehending bank robbers and uncovering campaign-finance irregularities and solving all sorts of other forms of ordinary crime. But unless and until it is radically reformed, it will remain deeply unsuited for the very different task now before it: protecting us from the al Qaeda cells that are believed to be in place in this country, apprehending whoever disseminated anthrax through the U.S. mail, and fending off all the unknown unknowns that lurk on the home front during the hazardous war in which we are engaged. It will also remain unsuited for the task of combating the very real and continuing problem of Chinese espionage—a problem made all the harder to address forthrightly on account of the FBI's botched handling of the Wen Ho Lee affair.

Altering the culture of the FBI is a crucial long-term task; but we are in a race against time, and it is a race we might easily lose.

* *The Bureau and the Mole*. Atlantic Monthly, 272 pp., $25.00.

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ART

Nazis, Jews, and "Mirroring Evil"

Steven C. Munson

Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/ Recent Art, on view at the Jewish Museum in New York through June 30, is a group show that engendered a storm of controversy even before it opened in March. It was clearly designed as a provocation—comparisons have been made with the last big controversial show in New York, the 1999 *Sensation* exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum of Art.* But there are important differences, the most obvious being that, while *Sensation* was aimed at shocking the general public and ended up offending Roman Catholics, *Mirroring Evil* seems aimed at a particular segment of the public, namely, those who, whatever their interest in art, have a definite interest in how the "issue" of the Holocaust is treated. In producing an exhibit in this spirit, those responsible for *Mirroring Evil* signaled from the start that they were pursuing one or more non-artistic agendas.

The nature of those agendas is only suggested by the art itself, the quality of which, like that of a lot of current conceptual art, is unsurprisingly low, ranging from polished to facile to kitschy to crude. (In this respect, the works in *Mirroring Evil* do have something in common with those in *Sensation*.)

The objects on display include the following: a room whose walls are lined with 147 14" x 10" print reproductions of pictures of movie stars (Clint Eastwood, James Mason, Yul Brynner, etc.) playing Nazi characters; a short video, replayed repeatedly, in which documentary film clips of Hitler's public speeches have been edited and spliced together in such a way as to make the Fuehrer speak in Hebrew the words, "Greetings, Jerusalem, I am deeply sorry"; a fake Lego concentration-camp set; a model of a death camp constructed on a flattened Prada hatbox; three cardboard cylinders, wrapped in colored paper and framed in a glass case, bearing the Chanel, Hermes, and Tiffany & Co. logos and labeled "Zyklon gas"; a room with a row of white pedestals, on top of which sit, in white baskets, white plastic kittens modeled to look like Hitler and holding little black swastikas—when you gaze into the mirror at either end of the row, you see an infinite regression of these "sculptures" that gives the impression of an endless line of prisoners; and a room in which all the walls have been covered from floor to ceiling with alternating photographic prints of Hitler and the artist Marcel Duchamp.

These works are said to be challenging, "transgressive," even "dangerous," because, as the catalogue essayists repeatedly remind us, they bring us "face to face with evil." At the same time, however, and like other types of conceptual art, they are not, primarily, meant to be looked at. Their true value is not intended to reside in the realm of visual or aesthetic experience and creation but rather, so we are told, in the ideas that these works are said to express. For this reason, we are urged to read the catalogue so that we may properly understand how we are to think about them.

That document makes quite clear the level on which both the artists and the curators are operating. Of Pietr Uklanski's Hollywood Nazi

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photo display, for example, chief curator Norman L. Kleeblatt writes, in the impressive-sounding jargon that is a hallmark of the contemporary art scene, "*The Nazis* is intimately related to postmodern art practice that intellectually scrutinizes and visually reframes representations from mass culture." Kleeblatt goes on to tell us that Uklanski was "prompted" to create his piece by a magazine article on "best-dressed actors," and that some viewers of his work were found "attempting to identify as many of the actors and roles as they could." Kleeblatt then spells out what he considers to be the real significance of the work: Uklanski's prints equate "Nazi" with "male," and he "mines the aesthetic preoccupation of some artists to engage in anthropological or archival research to demonstrate the futility of collecting and to undermine presumed power structures."

However nonsensical, this sort of talk is pretty familiar to anyone who follows the contemporary art scene; but other examples are far less benign. Consider the Hitler-Duchamp room. The images here were chosen, Kleeblatt writes (he contributed no fewer than eleven separate and quite breathless essays to the *Mirroring Evil* catalogue), because the artist, Rudolf Herz, sought to make "strategic use of the paradoxical fact that the 'greatest terrorist of the 20th century' [i.e., Hitler] and the hero of the 20th century's avant garde were photographed by the same cameraman—none other than Hitler's beloved photographer and the mastermind of his public image, Heinrich Hoffmann."

But there is nothing paradoxical, or even significant, about this fact—the pictures were taken twenty years apart. What is telling about the statement is Kleeblatt's description of Duchamp, who was not the "hero" of the 20th-century avant garde (that title, if it belongs to anyone, belongs to Cézanne) but of the anti-art movement known as Dada, which has had a baleful influence on much of the art of the past 40 years, including the art in this show.

Such intellectual and scholarly deficiencies pervade the *Mirroring Evil* catalogue, a fact that has not gone unremarked. In reviewing the show for the *New York Times*, Michael Kimmelman wrote that, like *Sensation* and other supposedly daring exhibits, *Mirroring Evil* "turns out to have too much trivial art and too many extravagant excuses for why that is the case." So what led the Jewish Museum, which can ill afford it, to mortgage its reputation to so dubious an enterprise?

The answer was hardly apparent from the press coverage surrounding the show, which focused on the outraged and/or baffled reactions of Holocaust survivors like Elie Wiesel and others who feel it is their continuing obligation to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. Those reactions were quite understandable; after all, for any museum to put on a display of art that, as the catalogue puts it, "plays with" the symbols and instruments of the suffering of millions of Jews who experienced first-hand the Nazi policy of genocide could only be taken as disturbed and deeply insulting to both the living and, especially, the dead. For the country's leading Jewish museum to undertake such a task seemed incomprehensible; as a result, *Mirroring Evil* was portrayed, à la *Sensation*, as another case of artists doing what they do these days, namely, finding new ways gratuitously to offend someone.

But this is also where the analogy with *Sensation* breaks down. The focus on "appropriateness" and "shock value," abetted by Jewish Museum officials scurrying, once the controversy broke, to show a sudden attentiveness to the feelings of their fellow Jews, obscured what *Mirroring Evil* is really about. Once we get past the common denominator of "outrageous" art, the real differences between the two exhibits start to become clear.

Sensation was mostly an expression of the free-floating, solipsistic, and often sexual "alienation" that has been a large part of the sensibility of the contemporary art scene. In *Mirroring Evil*, this tendency is best represented by such works as Roee Rosen's *Live and Die as Eva Braun* (1995) and Elke Krytufek's *Economical Love (Pussy Control)* (1998), *Economical Love (Hitler Hairdo)* (1998), and *Economical Love (Abstract Expressionism)* (1998). But unlike *Sensation*, *Mirroring Evil* takes as its organizing theme a historical event of considerable significance, and then instructs us in its "lessons" for today.

The director of the Jewish Museum, Joan Rosenbaum, described those lessons in the following words:

> As an art museum that presents all of Jewish culture, we are committed to showing works of contemporary artists who have used images of the Nazi era to make a powerful and timely investigation of the nature of evil. These artists ask each viewer to consider his or her responsibility toward civil society, and to be vigilant about the bigotry and dehumanization that continue in the world more than 50 years after the Holocaust.

This is indeed an encompassing statement. But as it happens, there are only two places where the show asks us to direct our vigilance—only two places, in other words, that are singled out as current locuses of evil in the world. They are America and Israel.

Thus, in an essay on Alan Schechner—whose contribution to *Mirroring Evil* is an Internet image of a famous photograph (by Margaret Bourke-White) of survivors of Buchenwald, into which he has digitally inserted a picture of himself holding a can of Diet Coke—assistant curator Joanna Lindenbaum tells us that "The Coke can draws parallels between the brainwashing tactics of the Nazis and commodification. Just as much of Europe succumbed to Nazi culture because it was the dominant paradigm, so

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does our contemporary culture succumb to consumerism."

In the same vein, the artist Tom Sachs, the creator of the show's *Giftgas Giftset* (1998) and *Prada Deathcamp* (1998), explains: "I'm using the iconography of the Holocaust to bring attention to fashion. Fashion, like fascism, is about the loss of identity." Norman Kleeblatt elaborates: "The artist investigates the way consumer culture works against personal identity, especially marketing and advertising. For Sachs, these objects reflect the most controlled corporate identity since National Socialism."

This sort of reasoning is emblematic of the *Mirroring Evil* catalogue and recalls nothing so much as the glib anti-American intellectualism of the 1960's, the premise of which was that free and democratic capitalist America had something fundamentally in common with totalitarian Nazi Germany (remember "Amerika"?). It is almost quaint to see this once-potent notion being resurrected in the form of an art-world cliché, but one cannot forget the fact that it had its genesis in a much grimmer period. The critic Ron Rosenbaum, writing in the *New York Observer*, made the point well in discussing one of the catalogue essayists who relates the art in *Mirroring Evil* positively to the 1940 Charlie Chaplin film, *The Great Dictator*:

> Chaplin made *The Great Dictator* at a time when a film that encouraged America to resist Hitler's evil might have made a difference in the war in Europe, which the U.S. had yet to join—might even have helped forestall the Holocaust. Instead, Chaplin made a film that explicitly advocated pacifism instead of resistance to evil, a film that followed the shameful Hitler-Stalin pact [i.e., Soviet] line that the struggle [of the Western democracies] against Hitler was merely a meaningless quarrel between morally equivalent capitalist powers. Here we see the consequence of the foolish belief that there is no "secure divide" between perpetrator and victim.

This "foolish belief" is, in fact, the central conceit of *Mirroring Evil*, as the catalogue relentlessly points out. But it is not mere foolishness that this exhibit purveys. For if the idea that America is Nazi-like no longer resonates as it once did and can be set aside as a kind of nostalgia, the idea that Israel has assumed something of the character of Nazi Germany is by no means safe to dismiss. And yet it would be difficult for anyone who reads this show's catalogue not to conclude that, in addition to their contempt for American values and success, a good number of those involved in *Mirroring Evil* are driven by a political animus against Israel.

Here is what Alan Schechner, who put the Diet Coke in Buchenwald, has to say about the Jewish state:

> Throughout my time in Israel, I became acutely aware of how the Holocaust was used to justify some of the unsavory aspects of Israeli policy. I was told more than once how: "Whatever we do to them (the Palestinians) can never be as bad as what they (the Germans) did to us."

The implication of this statement is clear: what Israel has been "doing" to the Palestinians is synonymous with what the Nazis did to the Jews. Or as assistant curator Joanna Lindenbaum writes approvingly, "not only does Schechner collapse history and the present into one image, he collapses victim and perpetrator into one person."

The idea that Israel somewhere along the line became a Nazi-like aggressor against the Palestinians is also not exactly new. A byproduct of the Six-Day war of 1967, it gained truly wide currency during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. But unlike the United States, Israel has been in a continuous state of siege vis-à-vis most of the Arab world ever since it was founded. Today, as nobody should need reminding, it remains the target of a war of terrorism that could not be waged without the support of Arab and Islamic states. And as "traditional" terrorism has been wedded to Islamic fanaticism, the level of truly virulent anti-Semitism has risen to dizzying heights. It is now commonplace to read in Arab or Palestinian media praise for the work Hitler did and calls to finish the job he started.

In other words, to quote the Jewish Museum's director, "bigotry and dehumanization" are indeed alive in the world "50 years after the Holocaust." Where the worst is to be found, however, is neither in Israel nor in America but among the contemporary acolytes of Hitler—those whom we can accurately describe as modern-day Nazis—in the Islamic world, among them the men responsible for the attacks not only on Israel but on the United States as well.

Mirroring Evil was, of course, conceived before September 11. But so were a lot of other events, many of which had no direct bearing on the issue of international terrorism and Israeli or American survival, and they were cancelled or postponed. Clearly, this exhibit could have been, too. At a minimum, the art it assembles is an offense against taste; but the justification for it, what Michael Kimmelman called the "extravagant excuses" for exhibiting it, is an offense against much more. That would have been true before September 11; it is even truer now.

Yet the Jewish Museum chose to carry on. Why? In the face of events that have clarified the "nature of evil" in the world as perhaps no others have done since the Holocaust, why would those in charge not reconsider, not admit to themselves that, what with Islamic fundamentalists like bin Laden ranting about killing Jews and Americans, and Hamas and its allies blowing up a couple of dozen Israelis every month, this was not the best moment to be offering a morally un-

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dermining critique of American consumer culture and Israeli policies of self-defense? Maybe it was simple inertia, maybe a sense of defiance; or perhaps, in the decision to proceed as planned, something else was at work, something like a self-willed and intrepid blindness.

Love, they say, is blind, and I think the phrase is strangely applicable here. Here is a sample of the overheated and at times off-the-wall discussion by the catalogue essayists of how, once inside the exhibition rooms, we should "imagine" *ourselves* to be Nazis:

> I think the artists also use our fascination with and curiosity about evil to entrap us, to seduce us into revealing whatever disavowed voyeuristic pleasure we can take in it. They give us the means to experience our own sadism and, later on, waves of shame and even remorse. Through our spectatorial power (to look) and our powerlessness (in being unable to resist their seduction) we become momentarily doubles for both the perpetrator of evil and its victims. Through our participation in an art that co-opts us this way, we actually replay that co-dependent relationship. . . . Arriving in the art museum . . . in a state of willing disbelief appropriate to the realm of the aesthetic, we are kidnapped. Simultaneously, conspiring with the perpetrators (real and imaginary), we evade the burden of our guilt, taste the juices of our own cruelty, and feast in fantasy on our brief mastery over what in real life would repel and/or destroy us.

It does not take a psychiatrist to see in this passage—and there are many more like it—that what the essayists imagine to be our "obsession" with Nazis is actually their own obsession, and one of which they are quite enamored. The evil they claim lies within all of us, whether we be Nazis or Jews, Islamic terrorists or American soldiers, hatemongers or writers of poetry, actually lies in their own effort "vicariously" to embrace their dark impulses. This is the art of projection, you might say, and on a grand scale.

As it turns out, reading the catalogue is a far more unsettling experience than seeing the objects in the show, which offer little of visual interest and nothing of aesthetic pleasure and, despite the curators' high hopes, do not actually move one to "experience," or even to think about, the nature of evil (but do cause one to wonder about the states of mind and political attitudes of some of the artists). The fact that the show fails to achieve its ambitious goal may explain why *Mirroring Evil* has been ridiculed—"artists seeking their inner Nazi" is how one headline writer put it. But if you think about what the curators would have us do—namely, force ourselves into a kind of temporary psychosis—it is hardly amusing. This activity is intended to erase all manner of distinctions, not just between "perpetrator" and "victim" but, for example, between railroad worker and executioner, collaborator and resister, bureaucrat and camp guard, rescuer and informer, the man who remained silent out of fear and the man whose silence was calculated—not to mention terrorist and innocent, terrorist and soldier, Nazi and consumer, Nazi and fashion designer, or Nazi and advertising executive.

The list could go on, but the point is clear: we are asked explicitly to obliterate our consciousness of such distinctions, that is, our moral sense. Put another way, the exhibit seeks to persuade us to *forget*—to forget everything we know. Thus it stands diametrically opposed to what was for a long time thought to be the one irreducible lesson of the Holocaust: to remember.

With reference to the works in *Mirroring Evil*, one of the catalogue contributors cites a "disturbing" question raised by the historian Saul Friedlander: namely, "whether a brazen new generation of artists bent on examining their own obsession with Nazism adds to our understanding of the Third Reich or only recapitulates a fatal attraction to it." This seems the right question to ask, and I think we can safely respond that this exhibit does not add to our understanding of the Third Reich but, if anything, tends to confound it. A perhaps more interesting question is: what accounts for the growing attraction on the part of artists to Nazi imagery? The answer to that question, I believe, lies as much in the realm of art as in the realm of ideas.

Many of the works in *Mirroring Evil* could have been produced in the absence of the "theoretical" rationale provided by the catalogue. They are entirely consistent with a general tendency in postmodern art—a tendency represented by *Sensation* as well—to create works that, for lack of a better term, may be described as against life. And as the catalogue now and then reminds us, they have artistic antecedents.

It was no doubt sheer coincidence that a major retrospective of one of the artists whose spiritual influence, if not the influence of his aesthetic sensibility or his devotion to painting, can be discerned in the works on view at the Jewish Museum opened in New York shortly before *Mirroring Evil*. The exhibit is called *Gerhard Richter: Forty Years of Painting*, and it can be seen at the Museum of Modern Art until May 21, after which it will travel to the Art Institute of Chicago, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, D.C. It is an eye-opening show, and one that should definitely be seen in conjunction with *Mirroring Evil*.

There is not a single oil painting in *Mirroring Evil*, yet many of the pieces it showcases are based, like Richter's, on photography. The latter's best known works—sometimes dubbed "photo-realist"—are large-

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scale paintings of photographs. Richter was heavily influenced by Andy Warhol, particularly Warhol's idea of the artist as "a machine," and the works that brought him critical notice in the 1960's and 1970's—including black and white deadpan renderings of World War II-vintage American planes flying in formation, paintings of a roll of toilet paper hanging on the wall, portraits based on family snapshots, including one of his uncle in Nazi uniform, and 48 equal-size portraits of famous figures as depicted in encyclopedias—were considered a German variant of pop art. At various times, Richter's art has been described as conceptual, political, philosophical, and, in the case of his abstractions, neo-expressionist. He is also known for no less deadpan color landscapes, paintings of flowers, truly disturbing nudes, paintings of charged subjects like the eight student nurses murdered by Richard Speck and the corpses of members of the Baader-Meinhof gang, and, more recently, domestic portraits of his wife and children.

There is much to be said about the MOMA show, about the variety of Richter's oeuvre, his antipathy to modernism, his admiration of the romantic (as represented by Caspar David Friedrich) and the classical (as represented by Titian and Vermeer), his stated aversion to politics, and, in particular, the role of effacing techniques in his painting. But this much is relevant to a discussion of *Mirroring Evil* and the nature of contemporary art: the two most striking aspects of Richter's work are a trademark blurriness in the reproduction of images and a clinical rendering of the photo-subject. This clinicalness is, in fact, so sustained that in looking at the many well-crafted works in the show, including several that are quite beautiful, with their seamless surfaces and painterly delicacy, one is left chilled to one's very marrow.

Richter himself, in a recent interview, has commented on this, the essential quality of his art:

> I mentioned "the banality of evil" in order to show that banality has at some point been described as something terrifying. The chandelier [he is referring to his painting, *Flemish Crown*] is a monster. I don't need to paint a monster; it is enough to paint this thing, this shitty, small, banal chandelier. That thing is terrifying. . . . I didn't have to distort faces. It is much scarier to paint people's faces as banal as I find them in photographs. That is what makes the banal more than banal.

This statement makes quite clear Richter's anti-life ethos—in which evil is not evil, banality is. If you think some of the artists and curators involved in *Mirroring Evil* have approached their work with a certain detachment vis-à-vis the matter of human feeling and its relation to art, consider Richter's answer to an interviewer's question about why he and a colleague abandoned their efforts to mount an exhibition of concentration-camp images and pornography:

> [Interviewer:] Finally, you decided that it was not possible to juxtapose such things nor even to make paintings from the documentary photos of the Holocaust. Why wasn't it possible?
>
> [Richter:] I'd say that it would have been impossible for *me*. I saw no possible moral or formal solution for how to exhibit the camp and the porno pictures. . . . I believe that there is no picture that can't be painted. But there are personal limits and limits of the time, situations where the reception would go so predictably wrong that it doesn't work. It is also the personal inadequacy to not be able to give something the right form.

As AN artist, perhaps, Richter deserves credit for failing to find the desired formal solution in this case. Moreover, it is a testament to his abilities in general that his paintings have the kind of unnerving effect that the organizers of *Mirroring Evil* could only hope for; they, like many of the artists they tout, seem to believe that simply making easy or clever use of the readiest symbol of evil to hand is sufficient to executing a significant work of art. Unlike the works in *Mirroring Evil*, Richter's art encompasses something bigger than a subjective alienation or a hackneyed social critique or a political agenda: it conveys the nihilistic spirit of his time.

The problem is that you do not really want to look at Richter's paintings for very long, which is a serious drawback for a painter. In the case of *Mirroring Evil*, by contrast, what is worth taking time to address is not the works but the ideas they represent. These include, finally, the ultimate justification that has been offered for the show—namely, that it provides a necessary corrective to years in which the Holocaust has been represented from the point of view of the victims. This is said to have constituted a misuse of that terrible event because of the risk of trivialization and the resulting cultural saturation.

The fact that some people are tired of hearing about what the Nazis did to the Jews is, of course, undeniable, and has been the subject of, among other things, some pretty good humor. ("How the hell do I know why there were Nazis?," says a Woody Allen character. "I don't know how the can opener works!") And who among us has not, at some point, thought that yes, never again, but do we have to be reminded so often?

But if the Holocaust suffers from overexposure, at least the usual tendency has been more or less faithful to the history of the event and its moral meaning. *Mirroring Evil* is an exhibit that seeks to distort that moral meaning, and to have us participate in the distortion. Among other things, this seems petty and soulless, and hardly the proper province of an art museum.

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MUSIC

Concluding the Great American Songbook

Terry Teachout

"LET ME make the songs of a nation," the Scottish statesman Andrew Fletcher declared in 1703, "and I care not who makes its laws." This oft-quoted remark applies with particular force to the huge body of pre-rock popular songs written in the 20th century and now known collectively as the Great American Songbook. To a remarkable degree, a large number of these songs—most of them, interestingly, romantic ballads—have embedded themselves in the consciousness of the public, and have since come to be identified throughout the world with the American national character and way of life.

American popular song and American popular singing are for all intents and purposes consubstantial. It is all but impossible, for example, to recall Harold Arlen's soaring melody for "Over the Rainbow" without simultaneously hearing the plangent voice of the young Judy Garland, who sang it in the 1939 film version of *The Wizard of Oz* (as well as on countless subsequent occasions). In order to illustrate this symbiotic relationship, I have compiled an annotated list of 50 popular singers of the 20th century, each one performing a different song, all of which are currently available on CD. What follows is the fourth and final installment of that list, the first three installments having appeared in the February, March, and April issues of COMMENTARY.

By way of a reminder, here are the first 40 songs, listed alphabetically by performer:

1. Karrin Allyson: "Some Other Time" (music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green).
2. Louis Armstrong: "How Long Has This Been Going On?" (music by George Gershwin, lyrics by Ira Gershwin).
3. Fred Astaire: "Cheek to Cheek" (music and lyrics by Irving Berlin).
4. Mildred Bailey: "St. Louis Blues" (music and lyrics by W.C. Handy).
5. Chet Baker: "He Was Too Good to Me" (music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart).
6. Tony Bennett: "I Walk a Little Faster" (music by Cy Coleman, lyrics by Carolyn Leigh).
7. Andy Bey: "Someone to Watch Over Me" (music by George Gershwin, lyrics by Ira Gershwin).
8. June Christy: "Lazy Afternoon" (music by Jerome Moross, lyrics by John Latouche).
9. Rosemary Clooney: "Do You Miss New York?" (music and lyrics by Dave Frishberg).
10. Nat King Cole: "Stardust" (music by Hoagy Carmichael, lyrics by Mitchell Parish).
11. Perry Como: "They Say It's Wonderful" (music and lyrics by Irving Berlin).
12. Mary Foster Conklin: "Mad About You" (music and lyrics by David Cantor).
13. Bing Crosby: "Make Believe" (music by Jerome Kern, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II).
14. Meredith d'Ambrosio: "Dream Dancing" (music and lyrics by Cole Porter).

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15. Blossom Dearie: "If I Were a Bell" (music and lyrics by Frank Loesser).
16. Dena DeRose: "More Than You Know" (music by Vincent Youmans, lyrics by Edward Eliscu and Billy Rose).
17. Jim Ferguson: "The Night We Called It a Day" (music by Matt Dennis, lyrics by Tom Adair).
18. Ella Fitzgerald: "What Is There to Say?" (music by Vernon Duke, lyrics by E.Y. Harburg).
19. Helen Forrest: "Day In—Day Out" (music by Rube Bloom, lyrics by Johnny Mercer).
20. Judy Garland: "The Man That Got Away" (music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Ira Gershwin).
21. Johnny Hartman: "Lush Life" (music and lyrics by Billy Strayhorn).
22. Dick Haymes: "It Might as Well Be Spring" (music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II).
23. Woody Herman: "I Hadn't Anyone Till You" (music and lyrics by Ray Noble).
24. Billie Holiday: "You Go to My Head" (music by J. Fred Coots, lyrics by Haven Gillespie).
25. Shirley Horn: "Where Do You Start?" (music by Johnny Mandel, lyrics by Alan and Marilyn Bergman).
26. Jack Jones: "You Must Believe in Spring" (music by Michel Legrand, lyrics by Jacques Demy and Alan and Marilyn Bergman).
27. Rebecca Kilgore: "Glad to Be Unhappy" (music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart).
28. Diana Krall: "I Get Along Without You Very Well" (music and lyrics by Hoagy Carmichael).
29. Cleo Laine: "Anyone Can Whistle" (music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim).
30. Barbara Lea: "Guess I'll Go Back Home (This Summer)" (music by Willard Robison, lyrics by Ray Mayer).
31. Peggy Lee: "Days of Wine and Roses" (music by Henry Mancini, lyrics by Johnny Mercer).
32. Julie London: "Laura" (music by David Raksin, lyrics by Johnny Mercer).
33. Dean Martin: "Imagination" (music by Jimmy Van Heusen, lyrics by Johnny Burke).
34. Carmen McRae: "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye" (music and lyrics by Cole Porter).
35. Mabel Mercer: "Did You Ever Cross Over to Sneden's?" (music and lyrics by Alec Wilder).
36. Joe Mooney: "But Beautiful" (music by Jimmy Van Heusen, lyrics by Johnny Burke).
37. Joan Morris: "I'm Old Fashioned" (music by Jerome Kern, lyrics by Johnny Mercer).
38. John Pizzarelli: "I'm Putting All My Eggs in One Basket" (music and lyrics by Irving Berlin).
39. Polly Podewell: "After You, Who?" (music and lyrics by Cole Porter).
40. Annie Ross: "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face" (music by Frederick Loewe, lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner).

Now for the final ten singers and songs, followed by a few concluding reflections on the place of the Great American Songbook in American art and culture—plus some brief remarks about one of its most notable contributors.

41. **Daryl Sherman**: "This Is New." Music by Kurt Weill, lyrics by Ira Gershwin.

Virtually no classical musicians of note have written successful popular songs, though a surprising number have tried, among them Milton Babbitt, Jascha Heifetz, and William Schuman. So, too, comparatively few European composers have worked effectively in the idiom of American popular song. An exception to both rules was Kurt Weill, a German-Jewish pupil of Ferruccio Busoni whose involvement with popular music dates as far back as *The Three-Penny Opera* (1928), the first of several theatrical collaborations with the poet-playwright Bertolt Brecht in which he made highly creative use of the idiosyncratic sounds of German "jazz." Weill emigrated to the U.S. in 1935, where he soon began writing for Broadway, collaborating on such musicals as *Knickerbocker Holiday* (1938, with Maxwell Anderson), *Lady in the Dark* (1940, with Moss Hart and Ira Gershwin), and *One Touch of Venus* (1943, with S.J. Perelman and Ogden Nash). Weill's unique ability to infuse the American popular-song idiom with his own distinctive musical vocabulary can be heard in "This Is New," a ballad from *Lady in the Dark* that, though not as frequently heard as the better-known "September Song" or "Speak Low," ranks among the finest of his American period.

Unlike most jazz singers who came of age in the 70's, Daryl Sherman was influenced not by bebop and later idioms but by the music of the Swing Era, in particular the singing of Mildred Bailey. Sherman's engaging style, which recalls Bailey's shivery vibrato and lightness of rhythmic touch, is well displayed in the affecting performance of "This Is New" heard on *Look What I Found*, a superior collection of unhackneyed standards accompanied by a dapper ten-piece band led by the trombonist-arranger Dan Barrett. The excellent guitarist on "This Is New," incidentally, is Bucky Pizzarelli, John Pizzarelli's much-admired father (*Look What I Found*, Arbors Jazz ARCD 19154).

42. **Frank Sinatra**: "Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars (*Corcovado*)." Music by Antonio Carlos Jobim, English lyrics by Gene Lees.

Starting in the 1950's, a group of Brazilian musicians influenced by the "cool jazz" of such American artists as Gerry Mulligan and Bud Shank developed a sophisticated

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musical idiom that came to be known as bossa nova. In the 60's, their songs began to be taken up in turn by American singers and instrumentalists. Antonio Carlos Jobim would ultimately contribute to the Great American Songbook directly, collaborating with the lyricist Gene Lees on English-language versions of his Portuguese songs as well as on new songs written directly in English. Their best-known effort, "Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars" (known in Portuguese as "*Corcovado*"), is a softly meditative bossa nova whose unusual harmonic structure—it neither begins nor ends on a key-establishing tonic chord—inspired Lees to produce one of his most romantic lyrics.

Frank Sinatra, generally regarded as the greatest of all American popular singers, made definitive recordings of a large number of songs now recognized as standards. To pick only one as representative of his style is impossible, so I have chosen instead to include a performance in which Sinatra departed—with complete success—from his accustomed repertoire. His 1967 recording of "Quiet Nights of Quiet Stars," delicately accompanied by the luminous orchestral palette of Claus Ogerman, displays with particular clarity Sinatra's ability to fuse words and music into an indissoluble expressive amalgam. Note especially his subtly varied "readings" of the two repetitions of the phrase "a bitter, tragic joke" (*Francis Albert Sinatra & Antonio Carlos Jobim*, Reprise 1021-2).

43. **Jeri Southern**: "Let Me Love You." Music and lyrics by Bart Howard.

Almost all of the songs written for New York's cabaret performers in the 50's and 60's are forgotten, in most cases deservedly so. Only one cabaret composer of that period, Bart Howard, eventually succeeded in breaking through to a wider audience, and that happened largely by chance. A pianist who worked as the master of ceremonies at the Blue Angel night club from 1951 to 1959, Howard produced a small but striking group of wistful, beautifully wrought love songs that were sung by a number of fine artists (including Mabel Mercer) but failed to catch the public's ear. Then Johnny Mathis included three Howard songs on his 1957 LP, *Wonderful! Wonderful!*, and the resulting royalties made the composer wealthy enough to give up songwriting. Four years later, Peggy Lee sang "Fly Me to the Moon" on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, and Howard unexpectedly found himself the author of one of the last major song hits of the pre-rock era. Though "Fly Me to the Moon" remains the most popular of his songs, it is for his earlier ballads that he is especially admired, particularly "Let Me Love You," a gentle yet insistent lover's plea that is a model of cabaret songwriting at its best.

Jeri Southern was all but forgotten when the jazz bassist Charlie Haden included one of her long-unavailable recordings on his 1992 album, *Haunted Heart*. Four decades earlier, she had had a brief vogue as what was then known as a "song stylist." A thoroughly trained musician, Southern also played excellent piano and sang in a low-pitched, softly sibilant voice; her popularity, though, had less to do with her exceptional artistic gifts than with her knack for projecting self-doubt and ruefulness—two qualities with which she was severely afflicted in her personal life. Chronic stage fright eventually forced her to stop performing. A bland orchestral accompaniment by Tutti Camarata notwithstanding, Southern's 1957 recording of "Let Me Love You" conveys something of her special intensity (*You Better Go Now/When Your Heart's on Fire*, Jasmine JASCD 602).

44. **Jo Stafford**: "Haunted Heart." Music by Arthur Schwartz, lyrics by Howard Dietz.

Arthur Schwartz and Howard Dietz wrote a large number of first-class songs between 1929 and 1937, most of them, like "Alone Together," "Dancing in the Dark," and "Something to Remember You By," for such Broadway revues as *Three's a Crowd* (1930) and *The Band Wagon* (1931). They were less successful with the plot-driven "book" shows that came to dominate musical comedy, and in 1937 Schwartz began working in Hollywood, also with limited artistic success. After World War II, the two men resumed their collaboration on Broadway. "Haunted Heart," with its wedge-like melody in which ascending scalar passages alternate with descending intervals, is one of Schwartz's most memorable inspirations. (Arthur Schwartz's son Jonathan would later become one of New York's best-known radio personalities and a key figure in the contemporary revival of the Great American Songbook.)

Jo Stafford was that rarest of birds, a hugely successful singer who was also universally admired by her fellow musicians. Her smooth-textured, maternal-sounding alto voice, infallible sense of pitch, and straightforward yet subtle interpretative style made her one of the most popular vocalists of the 40's and 50's. Stafford was especially beloved during World War II, when she recorded such evocative ballads as "Long Ago and Far Away" and "I'll Be Seeing You," though her later performances of more sophisticated songs like "Haunted Heart" have been of greater interest to a new generation of admirers. Paul Weston, Stafford's husband and regular collaborator, arranged the un-assuming yet wholly appropriate orchestral accompaniment to "Haunted Heart" (*Autumn in New York/Starring Jo Stafford*, Capitol/EMI 8 59958 2).

45. **Mel Tormé**: "When the Sun Comes Out." Music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Ted Koehler.

Not many American songwriters

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have produced actual twelve-bar blues, but more than a few of them have been affected by various aspects of the blues form, particularly the distinctive melodic coloration provided by its characteristic flattened thirds and sevenths. In this sense, no professional songwriter was "bluesier" than Harold Arlen, not only in "Blues in the Night" but in any number of his finest works. The very first phrase of "When the Sun Comes Out," for example, pivots on a string of flattened thirds ("When the sun comes out/And that rain stops beating on my window pane"), immediately establishing a pungent major-minor ambiguity that is not resolved until the very end of the song.

Unusually for an American popular singer, Mel Tormé conformed to the typically French classical voice type known as *baryton martin*—a "lazy tenor" who takes high notes not from the chest but in a falsetto-colored mixed voice. Though his cultivated ballad singing made him a teenage idol in the late 40's and caused him to become known as the "Velvet Fog" (a nickname bestowed by a disc jockey), Tormé was also strongly influenced by jazz, and his slow, impressively sustained version of "When the Sun Comes Out" is accompanied by a ten-piece "dektette" led by Marty Paich, modeled directly on the group with which Miles Davis made his influential *Birth of the Cool* recordings in 1949 and 1950. A talented songwriter in his own right, Tormé also wrote several interesting books, including a biography of the drummer Buddy Rich and a memoir of his stormy professional association with Judy Garland (*Lulu's Back in Town*, Bethlehem/Avenue Jazz R2 75732).

46. **Sarah Vaughan**: "Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year." Music and lyrics by Frank Loesser.

Before moving to Broadway, Frank Loesser wrote many memorable songs for Hollywood, and though his ballads tended to be the weakest part of his output, "Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year," among the last of his film songs, is a first-class piece of work by any standard. Not only is the lyric unpretentiously tender, but the repeated octave-wide melodic leaps have an almost operatic amplitude—not altogether surprising in light of the fact that the song was composed for the soprano Deanna Durbin to sing in the 1944 film noir, *Christmas Holiday*.

Bebop, the virtuoso style of jazz identified with the trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie and the alto saxophonist Charlie Parker, was primarily an instrumental idiom, but it also produced a few singers of interest. Foremost among them was Sarah Vaughan, whose vibrato-laden, luscious-sounding contralto voice grew still darker and deeper as she aged. A resourceful improviser, Vaughan was never primarily interested in songs for their own sake, and by the late 60's her interpretations had become self-defeatingly ornate. Earlier in her career, though, she was still capable of singing in a relatively uncomplicated and uncluttered fashion, as can be heard in her 1953 recording of "Spring Will Be a Little Late This Year." Though Percy Faith's orchestral accompaniment is too gooey, Vaughan makes the most of Loesser's handsome melody (*16 Most Requested Songs*, Columbia Legacy CK 53783).

47. **Fats Waller**: "Sweet and Slow." Music by Harry Warren, lyrics by Al Dubin.

The hugely prolific Harry Warren is not nearly so well-known as most of the other composers on this list, but his 500-odd songs, largely written for Hollywood, include such standards as "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "Jeepers Creepers," "I Only Have Eyes for You," "Lullaby of Broadway," "The More I See You," "There Will Never Be Another You," and "You're Getting to Be a Habit With Me"—more than enough to earn him a section of his own in the "Great Craftsmen" chapter of Alec Wilder's *American Popular Song: The Great Innovators, 1900-1950*. Though it is his ballads that are now most frequently sung, Warren also had a flair for catchy rhythm tunes, among them "Sweet and Slow," a delectable little song built around a dotted "riff" ("Rock-a-bye me to and fro") that he deploys with considerable imagination.

A now-volatile, now-delicate stride pianist with an impish streak, Thomas "Fats" Waller became famous in the 30's for deflating third-rate pop ditties by singing them in an inimitably mock-pompous manner. On occasion, however, he also recorded songs of higher quality, interpreting them with a fetching mixture of satire and sincerity. Waller's 1935 version of "Sweet and Slow," one of his best recorded vocals, is unmistakably lewd—he italicizes every *double entendre* in Al Dubin's mildly naughty lyric—but also unexpectedly touching. No less delightful is the light-fingered Waller piano solo with which the record opens (*Fats Waller: The Quintessence, 1929-1943*, Frémeaux & Associés FA 207, two CD's).

48. **Wesla Whitfield**: "I Wonder What Became of Me." Music by Harold Arlen, lyrics by Johnny Mercer.

To my mind, Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer were the foremost songwriting team of the pre-rock era, not excluding the Gershwins. Though each of them produced memorable songs in tandem with other colleagues, their special aptitudes—Arlen's flair for blues-colored, harmonically fresh melodies, Mercer's uncanny ear for the colloquial—were uniquely compatible. As is the case with the recordings of Frank Sinatra, it is impossible to choose a "best" Arlen-Mercer song, so I have opted instead for one of their less frequently sung masterpieces. For all the *joie de vivre* of his lighter efforts, Mercer was in private life a hard-drinking depressive

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capable of writing lyrics full of quarter-to-three sorrow à la "One for My Baby"; even more than that familiar song, "I Wonder What Became of Me" plumbs the depths of his alcohol-heightened despair. Arlen's harmonically complex setting of this masterly lyric is appropriately unsettling, not least in its eerie unwillingness to settle securely into a home key.*

In recent years, the word "cabaret" has come to be used to refer not only to such recherché artists as Blossom Dearie and Mabel Mercer but also to a number of younger performers of more traditional inclination (such as the late Nancy LaMott) who in the 50's would have appeared not in small cabarets but before mainstream pop audiences. Among the finest of these latter singers is the San Francisco-based Wesla Whitfield, who performs standards in a silvery, sharply focused mezzo-soprano voice, sensitively accompanied by her husband, the pianist Mike Greensill. A witty, swinging interpreter of rhythm tunes, Whitfield is no less at home in such dark ballads as "I Wonder What Became of Me," which she sings in a deceptively cool manner that does nothing to conceal the pathos of Mercer's despondent lyric (*My Shining Hour*, High Note HCD 7012).

49. **Margaret Whiting**: "Time After Time." Music by Jule Styne, lyrics by Sammy Cahn.

Jule Styne and Sammy Cahn, one of the top songwriting teams of 40's Hollywood, both spent the second halves of their careers working with different partners and winning still greater fame. Styne left Hollywood for Broadway after the war, subsequently teaming with Betty Comden and Adolph Green for *Bells Are Ringing* and with the young Stephen Sondheim for *Gypsy*, while Cahn replaced Johnny Burke as the principal collaborator of Jimmy Van Heusen. But the best of the many songs they wrote together remain deservedly popular—especially "Time After Time," whose sumptuous, wide-ranging melody evokes the following tribute from the famously demanding songwriter and chronicler Alec Wilder: "It's a strong, pure, dramatic, uncluttered, unselfconscious melody. It bespeaks personal involvement and great warmth. I know of no other ballad by Styne equal to it. I'd have been proud to have written it."

Margaret Whiting was one of the few female pop vocalists of the Swing Era who did not launch her career by singing with a big band. The daughter of the noted songwriter Richard Whiting, she was discovered by Johnny Mercer and started singing on network radio and recording for Capitol, Mercer's label, while still a teenager, scoring an immediate success with her father's "My Ideal." Few popular singers have had so finished a technique at so early an age; though she remains active to this day, Whiting's winningly direct style is best heard on the recordings she made in the 40's and 50's, including this 1946 performance of "Time After Time" (*Spotlight on Margaret Whiting*, Capitol CDP 8 29395 2).

50. **Lee Wiley**: "I've Got a Crush on You." Music by George Gershwin, lyrics by Ira Gershwin.

Appropriately enough, this survey ends with one of the most beloved ballads of the Gershwin brothers, whose work is widely thought to epitomize American popular song at its best and most characteristic. As was so often the case in their collaborations, Ira's irony-tinged, light-verse lyric for "I've Got a Crush on You," with its slightly self-conscious wordplay, sheds its emotional detachment when enlivened by George's heartfelt, precisely sculpted melody.

For the most part, jazz musicians of the Swing Era had little use for the pop singers with whom they were so often forced to work, but a few "canaries" managed to escape this opprobrium. Though there was nothing obviously jazzy about Lee Wiley's liquid alto voice and tasteful, unmannered interpretations, she liked working with jazz musicians, particularly the Chicago-style players associated with the guitarist-bandleader Eddie Condon, and they invariably reciprocated by speaking of her with affection and admiration. Wiley was the very first pop singer to make albums devoted to the songs of a single composer, and she recorded "I've Got a Crush on You" twice, first as part of a 1939 all-Gershwin album accompanied by a small jazz combo with Fats Waller on piano, then again in 1950, this time backed by a string quartet and the cornet of Bobby Hackett. Both versions are irresistible, and both are included in an imported four-CD set containing most of Wiley's studio recordings, making it unnecessary to choose between them (*Manhattan Nights: The Complete Golden Years Studio Sessions*, Definitive DRCD11157, four CD's).†

To COMPILE a list of this sort is to realize with painful clarity how much must necessarily be left out. Not only great individual songs ("Body and Soul," "I'll Be Seeing You," "I'm All Smiles," "What's New?") but important composers and lyricists (Dorothy Fields, Isham Jones, Burton Lane, Hugh Martin, Victor Young) have been passed over or scanted, simply because of the sheer impossibility of covering the entire field within the compass of a mere 50 songs.

What is no less distressing is that I have also been forced to omit a

* Revealingly, Stephen Sondheim included "I Wonder What Became of Me" on a list of "songs I wish I'd written (at least in part)" that he drew up last year as part of a 70th-birthday tribute. (The present list contains another song cited by Sondheim on that occasion, Cole Porter's "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye.")

† It should be noted, however, that a much better-sounding transfer of the 1939 version of "I've Got a Crush on You" is available on an anthology of recordings prepared by Richard M. Sudhalter to illustrate *Lost Chords*, his definitive 1999 history of "white musicians and their contribution to jazz" (*Lost Chords, 1915-1945: A Musical Companion*, Retrieval RTR 79018, two CD's).

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number of singers whose work I admire tremendously, either because their best recordings are no longer in print (Teddi King, Irene Kral, Nancy LaMott, Julius LaRosa, Nancy Marano, Eddie Monteiro) or because the recordings they made of the songs I chose to include are not currently available on CD (Connee Boswell, Jackie and Roy, Helen Merrill, Jack Teagarden).

To the many readers of COMMENTARY who have already written to point out where I have gone astray, I can only plead that, over and above matters of pure taste, undertakings like this one are by definition imperfect. Be that as it may, I am struck in retrospect by the kaleidoscopic variety of this list, for which credit belongs not to me but to the extraordinarily gifted artists who made the Great American Songbook so central a part of American art and culture in the 20th century, and whose continued efforts today are ensuring that it will remain relevant to American life in the century now upon us.

Of all the songwriters who figure in this list, only one, Johnny Mercer, appears more than three times. It was Mercer who wrote the lyrics for "Day In—Day Out," "Days of Wine and Roses," "I Wonder What Became of Me," "I'm Old Fashioned," and "Laura." Significantly, he wrote these songs in collaboration with five different composers: Rube Bloom, Henry Mancini, Harold Arlen, Jerome Kern, and David Raksin. No other American lyricist worked more effectively over a longer period of time with a larger number of composers. Indeed, in addition to the many fine songs Mercer wrote with these five (and most notably Arlen, with whom he also wrote "Blues in the Night," "Come Rain or Come Shine," "One for My Baby," "Out of This World," "My Shining Hour," and "That Old Black Magic"), I could just as easily have chosen five different Mercer songs written with five *other* composers. Such a list might be culled from any of the following: "Early Autumn" (Ralph Burns), "Emily" (Johnny Mandel), "I Remember You" (Victor Schertzinger), "I Thought About You" (Jimmy Van Heusen), "On the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe" (Harry Warren), "Once Upon a Summertime" (Michel Legrand), "P.S. I Love You" (Gordon Jenkins), "Skylark" (Hoagy Carmichael), "Too Marvelous for Words" (Richard Whiting), and "Something's Gotta Give" (for which Mercer himself wrote the music).

Mercer's true distinction, however, lies not in his versatility but in his singularity. Of all the lyricists represented here, it is he who most completely embodies in his work the specific qualities of American speech. The American's "one desire is to make speech lucid, lively, dramatic, staccato, arresting, clear—and to that end he is willing to sacrifice every purely aesthetic consideration," H.L. Mencken wrote in *The American Language*. "He judges language as he judges poetry, not at all by its grace of form but wholly by its clarity and poignancy of content." This is also true of Mercer, at least up to a point, for as it happens, his best lyrics also exhibit the "grace of form" Mencken reserves for poetry. Whatever utilitarian considerations brought them into being, their aesthetic appeal is considerable, raising them above the level of supremely well-crafted song lyrics and into the realm of the poetic.

As for the purely musical component of the Great American Songbook, it is no less memorable an achievement in its own way than are the many fine art songs written by major American classical composers like Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland, and Ned Rorem. Considered as a whole, indeed, the Great American Songbook must be seen to form a major part of the proud claim that 20th-century American culture can make on the attention of posterity.

Except as indicated, all of the CD's mentioned above can be purchased online by viewing this article during the month of May at COMMENTARY's website:
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Books in Review

Seize the Power?

Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution
by Francis Fukuyama
Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 256 pp. $25.00

Reviewed by
Kevin Shapiro

A GREAT deal has changed since our prehistorical forebears emerged from the African savanna some 200 centuries ago. Human beings have engineered ever larger and more complex societies, marked not only by advances in technology but also, for many of us, by substantial expansions of political freedom and opportunity. The life of Western man, once destined to be (in Thomas Hobbes's famous phrase) "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short," is now prosperous, pleasant, safe, and long. But there is one thing that we have never been able to modify, and that is our biology. We share with our plains-dwelling, hunter-gatherer ancestors essentially the same genes and the same brains, and they give rise in turn to the same stock of basic instincts, fears, desires, and uncertainties.

If Francis Fukuyama is right, this may not hold true for much longer. In *Our Posthuman Future*, the eminent social theorist looks into the crystal ball of biotechnology and descries something new: the ability to manipulate human nature by means of improved medical knowledge, behavior-altering drugs, and, eventually, genetic engineering. The question is, will this ability bring with it fundamental changes in the way we live our lives—and if so, should we care? Do we have anything to lose by embracing technologies that will enable us to live longer, become smarter, and feel better? Why not "seize the power," as the geneticist Lee Silver has asked, echoing Friedrich Nietzsche?

FINDING AN answer depends, first and foremost, on having a clear idea about where the biotechnology revolution may take us. Accordingly, the first part of *Our Posthuman Future* is given over to mapping what Fukuyama sees as the four major stages of our journey through the Nietzschean wilderness.

The first stage coincides with an increased understanding of the way the brain shapes human behavior, or, more precisely, the way it shapes individual differences in behavior. Here Fukuyama focuses on three hot-button topics—IQ, criminal behavior, and homosexuality—and the political implications that flow from the finding that each trait is, to some extent, biologically based.

On these particular topics, Fukuyama offers few really novel insights; his central message seems to be that we cannot ignore scientific findings just because they raise unpleasant concerns. But to the extent that traits like IQ and sexuality are among the most likely future targets of biotechnological manipulation, certain familiar controversies—if IQ is heritable, is social stratification inevitable? if homosexuality is genetic, should discrimination be banned?—do provide a useful preview of debates to come.

Fukuyama's second stage involves the increasing use of neuropharmacological agents to control behav-

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ior, tailor personality, and manufacture emotions. Ritalin and Prozac are just the tip of the iceberg; more powerful psychotropic drugs may soon be available to reduce anxiety, increase stamina, improve cognitive performance, and decrease sensitivity to pain. In the absence of serious side effects, it is hard to see how any meaningful restrictions could be imposed on their use. Surely any attempt to do so would be met with stiff resistance from doctors, social-service providers, pharmaceutical companies, and ordinary people wishing to better themselves through pharmacology.

At the same time, advances in biomedicine are likely, in the third stage, to push back the limits of the human lifespan. While we naturally tend to take a benign view of any technological development that prolongs life and promotes health, Fukuyama points out the unique political problems posed by an immense graying population. In the United States and Europe, debates over pension reform and national health care have already begun to focus on the increasing share of society's resources being devoted to the elderly. A shift in the demographic balance will also affect the structure of family obligations and social hierarchies. In one scenario, healthier elderly workers may opt to remain in the workforce, leaving fewer opportunities for the young. In another, medicine that preserves the body may not defeat age-related mental deterioration, with the result that more and more people will live longer in a vegetative state and the world will come to resemble an enormous nursing home.

Finally, there is the largely unknown territory of genetic engineering. This fourth stage is the most speculative, and likely the farthest off, but it is also the most revolutionary in its potential to transform human society. Like neuropharmacology and other forms of biomedicine, genetic engineering has some rather obvious potential benefits: diseases like Huntington's chorea and cystic fibrosis may one day be cured by genetic means. There is also, however, the possibility that genetic technology will be used for purposes like enhancing height or intelligence, and that these "improvements" can be made heritable, thus yielding classes of people who can afford such improvements and those who cannot.

At the end of the journey, Fukuyama writes, we are faced with a series of choices, and these choices are and will increasingly be accompanied by conflicts among groups with differing interests: old and young, rich and poor, genetic haves and have-nots. Some of the solutions to these conflicts might seem almost unthinkable today. Fukuyama suggests, for example, that we may eventually have to adopt a form of institutional "ageism" in order to allow young people to enter the workforce. Likewise, liberal democratic states might some day find themselves intervening to help "genetically disadvantaged" people raise the IQ's of their offspring.

And these possibilities represent just a few of the issues that we might yet face. True, a trait like IQ may turn out to be so complex, and its determinants so numerous, that genetically enhancing it will prove practically impossible. All the same, at least one of the four pathways will likely lead to a "posthuman" future. (Fukuyama thinks that neuropharmacology, the second pathway, will be able to accomplish everything we expect from genetic engineering, the fourth—only faster.) How are we to navigate this bewildering moral terrain? What restrictions can we or should we place on the use of biotechnology? Is there a single standard that can guide our decision-making, some core principle that is worth defending?

FUKUYAMA DEVOTES the second part of his book to answering this question in the affirmative. There is a human nature, he says, and it consists of the stock of innate ideas, species-typical emotional responses, and forms of cognition that human beings have acquired over their evolutionary history. This includes such basic instincts as sociability, an affinity for kin, and a desire for property and gain.

The uniqueness of this particular set of ideas and behaviors is, according to Fukuyama, the source of human dignity, and also the basis for any justified effort to defend and protect human nature from tampering. Rights, too, flow from this conception of nature; the most fundamental of these serve to advance universal and deeply felt human drives and ambitions. Change the source of those drives and ambitions, and we risk undermining the entire moral and political edifice we have built on the notion of human rights.

But what exactly *is* human nature, and how do we come to know about it? Here Fukuyama is perhaps deliberately vague. He suggests that the "classical" accounts of Plato and Aristotle should be revisited in light of modern empirical knowledge derived from fields like neuroscience, psychology, and evolutionary biology. These disciplines have helped to illuminate what Fukuyama calls "innate forms of human cognition" (like language) that in turn lie at the heart of human nature. We may not know precisely what these innate forms are, but together they constitute a genetic Factor X that "etches a bright red line around the whole of the human race." In Fukuyama's words:

> [I]n the evolutionary process that leads from prehuman ancestor to human beings, there was a qualitative leap that transformed the prehuman precursors of language, reason, and emotion into a human whole that cannot be explained as a simple sum of its parts, and that remains an essentially mysterious process.

Something similar happens on the individual level as well, in the

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developmental process that leads from an embryo to an adult human being. Somehow, a cluster of cells is transformed into a being with consciousness and the capacity for moral choice. Fukuyama eschews a religious explanation for this "qualitative leap"; he makes it clear that his concept of human nature does not depend on notions like "ensoulment," or the creation of man in God's image, and so is presumably strictly Darwinian.

Nevertheless, his view leads to a position on moral issues that is not dissimilar to one reached on the basis of religious belief. Human experimentation is clearly, for Fukuyama, an affront to the ontological uniqueness of human beings. So is reproductive cloning, which would fundamentally alter the nature of the relationship between parents and children.

Other questions are less clear-cut. Is it permissible to harvest stem cells from aborted embryos? What about genetic engineering? Characteristically, Fukuyama offers no answers. What he advocates is that we use the measuring stick of human dignity to arrive at an informed consensus about what applications of biotechnology are permissible, first on a national and then on an international level. We must, in other words, take charge of our destiny:

> We do not have to regard ourselves as slaves to inevitable technological progress when that progress does not serve human ends. True freedom means the freedom of political communities to protect the values they hold most dear, and it is that freedom that we need to exercise with regard to the biotechnology revolution today.

FRANCIS FUKUYAMA is not the first author to have pondered how biological science and its applications are challenging our understanding of what it means to be human. He begins his book with a nod to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), a novel about a biotechnological dystopia that now seems eerily viable. One might go back even farther, to H.G. Wells's science-fiction classics *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) and *The Invisible Man* (1897), with their penetrating insights into the moral implications of human efforts to "improve upon" nature.

But Fukuyama is no science-fiction writer, and *Our Posthuman Future* is no speculative fantasy. It is, rather, a thoroughly reasoned and careful assessment of the biotechnological revolution currently under way: the advances it is likely to bring, how those advances might affect the realm of politics, what the moral issues are, and how we should face them. In this exercise there are many what-ifs, and Fukuyama does not evade the nuances of possibility and likelihood; to the contrary, he doggedly tracks down their practical consequences. The result is a sort of philosophical guidebook to the 21st century, posthuman or not.

As impressive as his effort is, Fukuyama sometimes treads a very fine line, and nowhere more so than in his discussion of human nature. There is a scientific case to be made for human nature as the source of human morality—a case best made, perhaps, by the biologist E.O. Wilson in his books *On Human Nature* (1978) and *Consilience* (1998). Where Fukuyama departs from Wilson and other more biologically-minded writers is in his strenuous insistence that human nature gives us a superior moral status to other living beings. But just where his argument should be strongest, it also falls short.

On the one hand, Fukuyama seems to downplay our understanding of certain attributes that he deems critical to human uniqueness and yet somehow "mysterious." His assertion that scientists have little to say about the evolutionary origins or purpose of human emotions appears to ignore a long and productive line of research that stretches back to Charles Darwin's monumental *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872). On the other hand, he pays scant attention to language, the one cognitive ability that humans certainly possess and animals certainly do not. As a consequence, Fukuyama really does not seem able to tell us, in the end, all that much about the basis for human uniqueness.

To be fair, a deeper analysis might only muddy the waters further. The last thing anybody needs is to be sidetracked into a debate over whether a particular mental faculty can or cannot account for everything we intuitively associate with being human; such quibbles obscure the more essential point that there is indeed something in our ontological makeup that makes human dignity a meaningful and defensible concept. Unfortunately, Fukuyama's solution—identifying human nature with some mysterious and ineffable but genetically rooted Factor X—is not likely to convince anyone who is skeptical of arguments from nature in the first place.

WHETHER ANY of this matters is another question. What makes us special is an interesting question from a philosophical perspective, but practically speaking it is not clear that we need find an answer. What is needed is to take seriously the developments Fukuyama worries about, as well as his core (if admittedly problematic) idea that future moral dilemmas will have to be solved by reference to a concept of dignity based on human nature.

The biotechnology revolution may allow some of us to enhance our looks, or improve our strength or stamina. It seems somewhat less likely, at least in the short or medium term, to allow us to alter significantly the natural distribution of human intelligence, personality, or any other centrally important trait. But there remains the very real danger that we will use arbitrary genet-

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ic markers as a way of discriminating among classes of people—or as a mechanism for disclaiming responsibility for our own behavior.

In light of this possibility, it will be increasingly necessary to keep in mind that Factor X, whatever its metaphysical packaging, endows all human beings (and only human beings) with the capacity for reason and moral choice. As long as we hew tightly to the principles of human dignity and equality that most of us already hold dear, the road to our human future may, just may, be negotiable.

Rule, Britannia

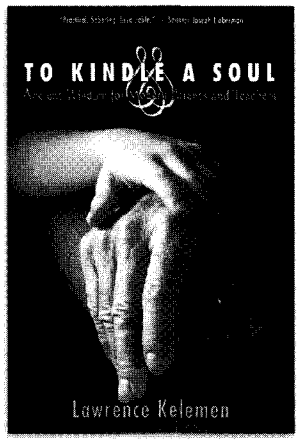
The Long Recessional:
The Imperial Life of
Rudyard Kipling
by David Gilmour

Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 368 pp. $26.00

Reviewed by
David Pryce-Jones

Rudyard Kipling was as great a writer as any in the English language. His output ranged from novels and poetry, and some of the finest short stories ever written, to a regimental history of the Irish Guards. He could play on every emotion, from majesty to bathos and sentimentality. He seemed to have a special affinity for the imagination of children. Mowgli and Bagheera, Stalky, Rikki-Tikki-Tavi, Kim, and other characters are still so much a part of our general culture that some of them have been Disneyfied. Phrases and catchwords, sometimes whole poems, remain as fresh as when he wrote them. And yet he has never received his due.

David Pryce-Jones, *the British political analyst, is a senior editor of* National Review. *His review of Henry Kissinger's* Does America Need a Foreign Policy? *appeared in our November 2001 issue.*



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In part this is because his personality was complicated, a strange and almost manic mixture of reticence and combativeness, of energy and melancholy. In more general terms, he was a conservative, or rather an outright Tory, in a liberal age: a defender of the British empire and of the English-speaking peoples worldwide. Despite his huge gifts, this outlook placed him on the losing side in the ideological warfare of the 20th century. In the eyes of run-of-the-mill opinion-makers, he was a reactionary, a jingoist and imperialist and racist, standing against Utopia and Progress. History itself seemed to be going against everything he valued—so much so that his name eventually became a byword for everything abhorrent to correct opinion. This was a triumph of unfairness.

A few years after Kipling's death in 1936, the American literary critic Edmund Wilson formulated the party line, arguing that Kipling's work was "shot through with hatred" and that he had committed one of the most serious sins possible for an imaginative writer by "discard[ing] his own moral intelligence in favor of the point of view of a dominant political party." This was absurd and false, and yet things went so far and so fast that by 1941 George Orwell—himself hardly open to the accusation of jingoism or imperialism—felt called upon (in an essay in *Horizon*) to rebuff "the shallow and familiar charge that Kipling is a fascist." Evelyn Waugh, with intuitive sympathy, put his finger on the essential point about Kipling's brand of conservatism. Kipling, he wrote,

> was a conservative in the sense that he believed civilization to be something laboriously achieved which was only precariously defended. He wanted to see the defenses fully manned, and he hated the liberals because he thought them gullible and feeble, believing in the easy perfectibility of man and ready to abandon the work of centuries for sentimental qualms.

Kipling himself wanted neither honors nor biographers. He burned many of his papers, and his difficult daughter put a ban on the biography that she herself had commissioned. More recently, Harry Ricketts and Andrew Lycett have published biographies that, deviating from the party line, have shown Kipling more in the round. David Gilmour, himself a conservative with literary tastes, and the author of a biography of Lord Curzon, goes still further, presenting Kipling as the public figure he was and rehabilitating both him and his ideas.

BORN IN India in 1865, Rudyard Kipling was the son of a man who taught arts and crafts at a college in Bombay. His mother's two sisters had made successful marriages, one to the painter Sir Edward Burne-Jones and the other to Alfred Baldwin, a rich ironmaster whose son Stanley would eventually become a Tory prime minister. As was the custom in Anglo-Indian families, the five-year-old Rudyard was sent home to England to board with strangers for his education. These strangers were unkind, and insecurity began then and there. Kipling's short story, "Baa Baa, Black Sheep," is the classic account of a child's betrayal by his parents.

Returning to India at the age of sixteen, Kipling learned his trade as a journalist on the *Civil and Military Gazette*, published in the predominantly Muslim city of Lahore. A natural reporter, he erupted on the Anglo-Indian scene with collections of pieces and stories that had originally appeared in that paper. He was no respecter of persons; both in these early works and later he mocked British pretensions while sympathetically portraying figures outside the bounds of polite literature: dutiful officials of the Indian Civil Service or ordinary soldiers with names like Mulvaney and Ortheris and Learoyd, the protagonists of some of his best stories.

The great debate in late-19th-century Anglo-India concerned the future of the Indians. Kipling believed with passion that they should remain Indians, and not be taken out of their own culture to become mimic Englishmen. The task of the British was to keep the peace between and among communities that were evidently unable to do this for themselves. In his work, he explored and admired the diversity of these communities. The hero of one of his most moving stories, "The Miracle of Purun Bhagat," is the prime minister of an Indian princely state, holder of a British knighthood, feted by high society during a visit to fashionable London. Resigning his powerful position, Purun becomes a Hindu holy man and hermit but is able to use his intelligence to save nearby villagers when a landslide threatens to destroy them. What comes through in this story is an overwhelming tenderness toward Purun and his people. No less discriminating a critic than Nirad Chaudhuri was to hold that Kipling's *Kim* (1901), a book composed for children, was the finest story ever written about India.

A celebrity already in his early twenties, Kipling returned to London where he met the men he felt himself to be pitted against. There were, of course, some—including Joseph Conrad and Henry James—who acknowledged his greatness at once; James referred to him as "that little demon of genius." But this was also the heyday of aestheticism, epitomized by Oscar Wilde in literature and, in painting, by Kipling's uncle Edward Burne-Jones and his circle. The fashion immediately provoked him to satire: "But I consort with long-haired things/ In velvet collar-rolls,/ Who talk about the Aims of Art,/ And 'theories' and 'goals,'/ And moo and coo with womenfolk/ About their blessed souls."

True, Kipling gave his enemies

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something to go on. He could write unselfconsciously that the "fuzzy-wuzzies" of the Sudan were first-class fighting men, or pen lines that might have been self-parodies: "There's a regiment a-comin' down the Grand Trunk Road" or "Ford, ford, ford o' Kabul river,/ Ford o' Kabul river in the dark." To Max Beerbohm, a fastidious master of mockery, Kipling was an "Apocalyptic Bounder who can do such fine things but mostly prefers to stand (on tip-toe and stridently) for all that is cheap and nasty." More than anyone else, Beerbohm helped to ground the eventual liberal campaign against Kipling in aesthetic snobbishness, caricaturing both him and everything he stood for as essentially vulgar.

Here is where Gilmour begins his counterattack. He concedes that, to Kipling, imperialism was something static, and to that extent patronizing. But the essential truth perceived by Kipling was (as Gilmour puts it) that minorities in countries like India fared better within an imperial or multinational system than in nation-states dominated by the ethos and ethnicity of a majority. Kipling also understood something else: if the British withdrew, Muslims and Hindus would be at each others' throats—as it has proved.

Few people in the Victorian and Edwardian eras had the imagination to sense the impending end of the British empire, or the wider horrors to come. Kipling was an exception, and Gilmour has no hesitation in calling him a prophet, one who proved right time after time. Thanks to his American wife, Carrie Balestier ("a hard devoted little person whom I don't in the least understand his marrying," observed Henry James, who gave her away), he spent some productive years in Vermont and made a number of staunch American friends. It was to some of these, including Theodore Roosevelt and Cameron Forbes, governor of the Philippines, that he

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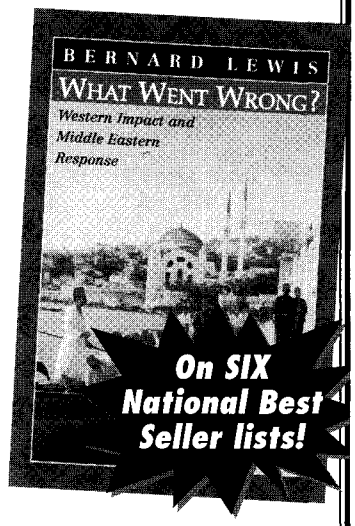

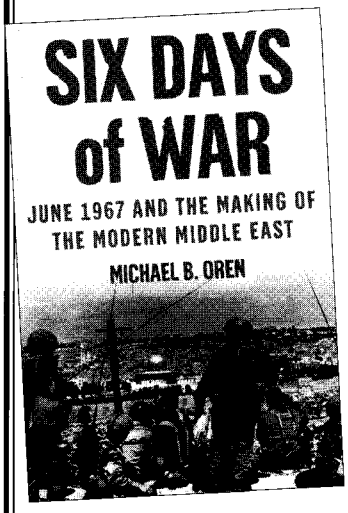

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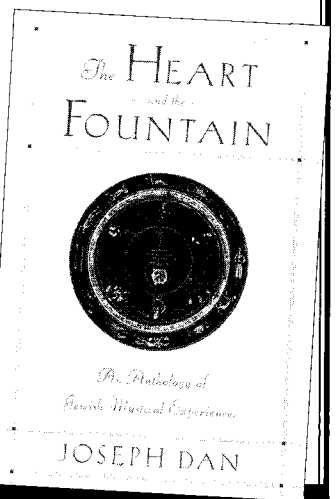

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addressed his famous exhortation to take up "the white man's burden." If the British could no longer keep the world's peace, then the United States would have to undertake this thankless task. It would come as no surprise to Kipling that American soldiers are now fording the Kabul river.

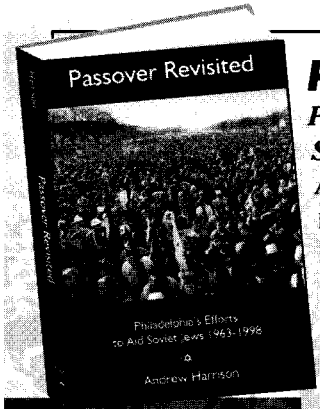
Cecil Rhodes, a true imperialist, first introduced Kipling to South Africa and built a house for him there, where for many years the writer spent his winters. The 1899-1902 war between the Boers—the old Dutch inhabitants of that country—and the British brought to the surface two of Kipling's permanent preoccupations: the unreadiness of the British army to face any serious test in the field and the malign purposes of Germany, whose hand he detected manipulating the Boers. Free from any romantic notions about war, he understood that power brings responsibility, and responsibility often entails soldiering. He was outraged by the generous accommodation finally reached with the Boers, foreseeing, as Gilmour underlines, that the way was now open for Boer supremacy and—eventually—apartheid. Similarly, to give way to Sinn Fein terror in Ireland, Kipling believed with perfect acuity, would in the end unravel the United Kingdom.

Criticism of his own country and its people was never far from Kipling's mind or pen. He admired engineers and sailors and the few politicians, like Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Milner, who shared his anxiety about the vulnerability of the empire. Conversely, he held in contempt the many who claimed privilege without responsibility, glib politicians, the upcoming socialists ("soccers," in his disparaging idiom), and indeed anyone who failed to do his duty, or let others down, or professed to know better than the men doing the real work. His most resonant poems are warnings to the British to mend their smug ways lest they find themselves "at one with Nineveh and Tyre."

His usual procedure was to write to the handful of like-minded editors he knew, cajoling them into editorializing as he advised or into publishing his latest poem. There is in much of his verse a rhetorical quality that made him a public orator. As Gilmour testifies, the British, ever accommodating, were prepared to hear Kipling out, and even to regard him as a national figurehead, especially after he became England's first Nobel laureate in literature in 1907—on condition that they be allowed to carry on as complacently as before. So much for the power of literature.

BETWEEN THE victory of the Liberal party in the general election of 1906 and the end of World War I, the Conservatives were out in the cold. During that period, Kipling's angry identification with the Tory rump, and his grim but accurate forecasting of a coming war with Germany, condemned him to the status of a has-been and a diehard. There would be a personal price to pay, too. Campaigning for recruits, Kipling felt it was incumbent on his only son John to enlist in the Irish Guards, nearsighted and underage though the boy was. John was killed on almost his first day in action, and his body was never found. "But who shall return us our children?" is the haunting refrain of a poem commemorating him. Another of Kipling's war poems contains a couplet of heartfelt bitterness: "If any question why we died,/ Tell them, because our fathers lied."

Between the wars, his cousin Stanley Baldwin became prime minister. Kipling rightly criticized him for indolence and lack of foresight.



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Andrew Harrison

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Worse than the misguided "soccers" were Tories who lacked the courage of their convictions or failed to read the signs of the times. The second world war, he thought, had begun on the day the first ended. The rise of Hitler fulfilled his nightmare vision of Germany. "This is the midnight," he warned in a poem in 1932. By the time of his death four years later, it seemed that no heed whatsoever had been paid to anything he had said or striven for.

To liberals, the prime struggle of the 30's was between Communism and fascism. For Kipling, Gilmour observes, the struggle was instead between Germany and Western Europe, "between barbarism and civilization." Winston Churchill shared this view, and Gilmour detects similarities between Churchill's great speeches and the prose rhythms of *The Jungle Book* (1894). Intriguingly, however, although by conviction a Churchillite in almost every respect, especially where India and the empire were concerned, Kipling did not much care for the man. (His memory was long: Churchill had criticized Lord Milner and others of Kipling's friends, and had switched parties.) Gilmour nevertheless concludes that the very survival of Britain in the crucial year 1940 owed much to the spirit of Kipling as epitomized by Churchill.

The timing of *The Long Recessional* could not be better. At a moment when conservatism in Britain is at a very low ebb intellectually and morally, and the independence of the country may yet be surrendered voluntarily to the rising European empire, it is most unexpected, but very welcome indeed, that justice should be done to Kipling. He was not wrong about the perils of British complacency. And was he wrong in his essential ideological belief that if some peoples cannot manage their affairs peacefully, then other peoples may have to do it for them?

War, civil war, dictatorship, and failed states have in numerous instances succeeded the British and other empires. Many a country formerly within one of these empires is nominally independent today but in no sense free, and constitutes a danger to itself and to others. The United States seemingly has no choice but to assume the responsibility that comes with power, to enforce the peace, and, if need be, to remake dangerous states. What if Kipling was right, and imperialism is a term for the defense of civilization? This book suggests that he may yet have the last word.

Femme Fatale

Woman's Inhumanity to Woman
by Phyllis Chesler
Thunder's Mouth Press. 551 pp. $22.95

Reviewed by
Kay S. Hymowitz

In 1970 Phyllis Chesler strode onto the feminist stage with a speech to the American Psychological Association demanding that the profession pay a million dollars in reparations for all the poorly "adjusted" women whom its members had tranquilized, seduced, hospitalized, raped, electro-shocked, and lobotomized. The money was never forthcoming, but Chesler's stunt was the launch of a brilliant career. Her best-selling *Women and Madness* followed two years later, succeeded over the decades by eight more books on the plight of women under the "patriarchy." Though her fame eventually waned, Chesler's radicalism did not. As she recently wrote, "It may be 1998, but

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Kay S. Hymowitz *is a contributing editor of* City Journal *and the author of* Ready or Not: What Happens When We Treat Children as Small Adults.

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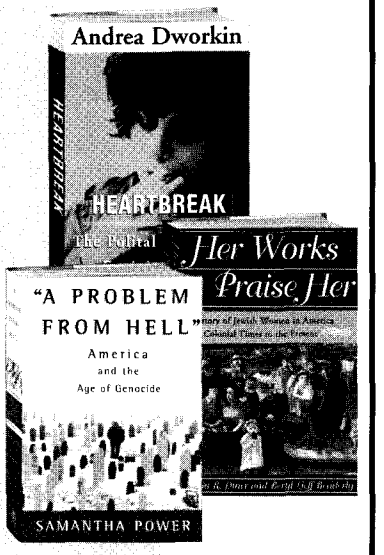

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in my view we are still living in the 1950's."

Could it be, then, that *Woman's Inhumanity To Woman*, Chesler's latest book, represents a conversion, a parting of ways between our era's most influential social movement and one of its minor stars? Feminists generally have depicted women as empathetic and caring creatures, victims of male aggression and dominance. Chesler appears to want to overturn at least part of this orthodoxy. As she relentlessly argues, women give as good as they get, especially toward each other.

CHESLER BEGINS with a run-through of the scientific and historical evidence on female violence. Among primates, evolutionary psychologists have found, females often bid for "alpha" status by trying to sabotage the reproductive cycles of their sisters. Mother lemurs and chimps have been known to kill and even cannibalize their competitors' babies.

As for the human side of things, the gentler sex is not always so gentle. Japanese, Chinese, and Indian mothers-in-law frequently beat their son's wives, whom they treat more like slaves than like daughters. Genital mutilation in Africa, honor killings in Islamic countries, burnings over dowry disputes in India—all take place against women with the enthusiastic support of other women. In the Western world, Southern white women humiliated and beat their female slaves, while gangs of young women in today's Mexico and Los Angeles visit mayhem on each other, often in arguments over men.

More commonly, Chesler relates, females battle each other by resorting to what social scientists call "indirect aggression"—gossip, manipulation, backstabbing—methods at which they can be very skilled indeed. Chesler gives as a prime example the remark of Mary McCarthy upon encountering Susan Sontag in the early 1960's. "Oh," she said, looking the younger writer up and down. "You're the imitation me." Researchers in a number of countries have found that such nastiness starts early. Schoolgirls use their considerable social skills to jockey for status within a clique and, when slighted, keep their resentments boiling far longer than do boys.

Some of this behavior, Chesler believes, can be explained by psychoanalytical theory. She speculates that women's penchant for indirect aggression results from the frustrated romance of the mother-daughter bond. Longing for intimacy, girls may be enraged to find that their mothers reserve most of their affection for their husbands. To this Chesler adds a portrait of the "Demetrian" mother—named for the goddess Demeter, who kept her grown daughter Persephone in tow six months a year—who feels betrayed when her child shows signs of independence.

This is not to suggest, Chesler hastens to add, that women alone are to blame for women's inhumanity. Another culprit (needless to say) is the "patriarchy," especially in today's male-dominated workplace. She cites a study showing that female economists were more likely than their male counterparts to reject the proposals of women for National Science Foundation funding—a result, Chesler asserts, of women having to compete among themselves for a few token positions. Nor are things any better in office settings, where women obey the dictates of various dysfunctional "gender standards." Thus, some female managers pretend to be caring mother figures in order to suppress dissent and demands for money, while others act, as one of Chesler's subjects put it, like "male-impersonators."

The book is also replete with examples of how Chesler herself has endured life in an estrogen-pumped war zone. Her own breathtakingly

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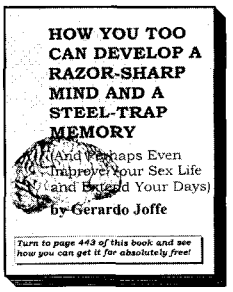
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malicious mother "demanded, ordered, accused, threatened, punished, screamed. Slapped. Pulled hair." Chesler *mère* bristled at hugging or kissing her daughter, criticized her relentlessly, and greeted her publications with remarks like, "What? Another book against the men?" Chesler also chronicles the envy her success has provoked in other women, some of whom tried to become her "intellectual daughters." These women, we learn, stalked Chesler, left her murderous phone messages, plagiarized her work, and even told lies about her to her friends and colleagues.

Looking back, Chesler remembers the early days of the feminist movement with fondness. She and her fellow radicals were "smoldering figures of sin and soul . . . giants on the earth." But she now believes they were denying the realities of female psychology. She questions feminist demonizing of the poet Ted Hughes, showing instead his wife Sylvia Plath's penchant for paranoid rages, and tells tales about the rigged elections, whispering campaigns, and other internal cruelties of groups like NOW.

The problem, Chesler writes, was that feminists of her generation saw themselves as "the equivalent of a family or a religious order" and worshipped each leader "as if she were the Good Fairy Godmother." Now this "lapsed utopian," as she calls herself, has been humbled. Feminists, she concludes, are "no worse—but no better—than any other group of human beings, male or female."

As such statements suggest, *Woman's Inhumanity to Woman* has its lucid moments. Chesler is frequently an eloquent writer. She is especially interesting on family dynamics, and her notion of the "Demetrian" mother—who hasn't known one?—deserves to go on a list of familiar sociological types. Though many of her supposed insights would have seemed tritely obvious to our corseted grandmothers, it is useful, in our own ideologically fogged times, to be reminded that women, like other fallen creatures, suffer from envy, ambition, pride, and resentment, and that they substitute cunning for force in their efforts to fashion the world to their liking.

Still, *Woman's Inhumanity to Woman* is so beset by intellectual hysteria, and so crammed with personal grievances, that most readers will find it more interesting as the unwitting biography of a flamboyantly self-obsessed late 20th-century feminist than as a serious analy-

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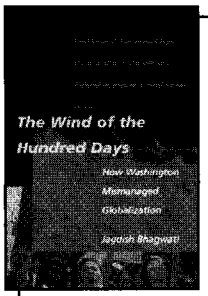

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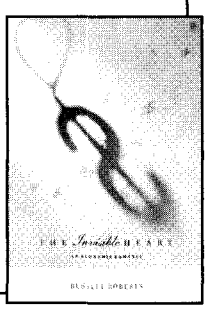

sis of female nature. Chesler leaves us with a weird phantasmagoria of girls behaving badly, a litany of the worst examples of feminine nastiness from literature, psychology, opera, myth, and (supposedly) ordinary experience.

Many of her anecdotes—and there are scores of them, from clients, friends, and acquaintances, or friends of friends and acquaintances—have a gaspy, "can you believe she did that?" quality. There is the blind mother who met her adult daughter in a restaurant and reached into her blouse to see if she was wearing a bra, the mother who did not call her daughter for three months after the death of the younger woman's twelve-year-old child, the woman who lives three blocks away from her wheelchair-bound sister but never visits her.

As for Chesler's account of her own experiences, it is suspiciously self-serving. One minute she laments the effect of her mother's exceedingly difficult personality on her own development, the next she announces, "Truly I am the daughter of male experts, I am not my mother's daughter." (If one thing emerges clearly from the book, it is that Chesler *is* her mother's daughter.) As she tells it, it has been her misfortune since childhood to be surrounded by viciously jealous, endlessly spiteful, grasping females who sought to do her harm.

Surely it is no accident that Chesler leaves out of her account the most memorable story from one of her earlier books—about a party in the mid-70's at which she herself slugged in the face a woman who had angered her. The exploit was liberating, she reported then, but recounting it here would point too obviously to the fact that *Woman's Inhumanity to Woman*, like that punch decades ago, is Chesler's payback to foes real and imagined.

Although Chesler continues to believe that feminism saved her soul, one cannot help wondering whether the movement was not especially damaging to a young woman prone to theatrics, vengeance, and egotism. All revolutionary movements attract big personalities who use ideological battles as a stage for their petty resentments. But feminism, which tried to erase the boundaries between the personal and the political, has been an especially fertile ground for such self-dramatization.

"Only recently," Chesler writes, "have I been able to acknowledge that my own bold ideas and my passionate, direct style are probably very threatening to other women." She knows whereof she speaks when she says that women also aspire to be the biggest lemur in the jungle. She latched on to a movement that gave that ambition a voice without teaching her to modulate it.

No More Vietnams

The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power
by Max Boot
Basic. 384 pp. $30.00

Reviewed by
Frederick W. Kagan

FEW BOOKS published this decade will be timelier than Max Boot's *The Savage Wars of Peace*. It is not about Afghanistan, and it is not even about today: Boot's tale does not reach the year 1945 until around page 300. What Boot does instead is to explode the myth that the traditional American way of war has been to fight with massive superiority, win quickly, and leave. This myth has served in recent years to restrain and sometimes to paralyze American foreign policy. In fifteen lucidly written chapters, Boot shows that such large-scale conventional wars have always been the ex-

FREDERICK W. KAGAN *is an associate professor of military history at West Point.*

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ception in American history, while protracted, complex, "political" conflicts have been the rule. It is a history lesson we would do well to learn.

Organized into three chronological sections (covering the 19th century, 1900-1945, and 1945 to the present), *The Savage Wars of Peace* explores America's efforts at peacemaking and counterinsurgency in a vast array of places around the world: the Pacific (China, Korea, Vietnam, and the Philippines, but also Samoa and the Marquesas); Latin America (Nicaragua, Cuba, Panama, Mexico, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic); North Africa (against the Barbary pirates); and Russia (against the Reds during the Russian Civil War). Drawing on extensive primary and secondary research, Boot, an editor at the *Wall Street Journal*, argues persuasively that such small wars (as he calls these sorts of guerrilla conflicts) are historically not only something the United States has done frequently, but something it has done well. Vietnam may have been our most spectacular failure, but we have had many successes.

These successes, moreover, have formed a fairly consistent pattern. Typically, a political crisis erupts in a country in which the U.S. has an interest. The President, unwilling to abandon the interest but equally unwilling to undertake a massive commitment of force, sends a small element composed of professional military personnel, frequently the Marines, to "deal with it." Generally, as Boot shows in his chapters on the Boxer Rebellion, the Philippines, and the Caribbean, the small U.S. force enjoys both technological "overmatch" and vastly superior training, and has been able to face down much larger but less well-equipped and less well-organized insurgents.

Until the 1980's, "dealing with it" rarely stopped at shooting guerrillas. Almost everywhere they went, U.S. troops bettered the lot of local inhabitants by building roads, hospitals, and schools, improving sanitation, housing, and food distribution, reducing malaria, and vaccinating adults and children. They stayed for years, sometimes decades, delicately poised in the complex politics of the country, working to gain the support of the population and to stabilize the situation. On the whole, it worked; areas that had previously not known months of peace were pacific for decades at a time.

The legacy of American "imperialism" has thus by no means been entirely negative. Indeed, what emerges from the picture drawn by Boot is that, in many troubled regions, the positive aspects of modernization would have been much slower to arrive had America failed to step in and permitted other "colonizing" states freely to work their will. Filipinos have their complaints against the U.S., but they might usefully inquire of Koreans about *their* experience under Japanese tutelage, or of Kazakhs and Uzbeks about the devastating effects of decades of Soviet-Russian misrule, or of Congolese about the hideous benefits of Belgian dominion. Whether or not American motives were altruistic—usually they were not—or always praiseworthy, there is a reason why, despite the intense hatred of the U.S. that persists in some precincts, people across the planet seek to emulate us.

Vietnam remains the exception—not because we have not usually fought such "small-war" conflicts, but because we usually win them. The literature on Vietnam is now so vast, and the controversies so fierce, that in a certain sense it is impossible to write a "chapter" on that conflict. Boot's own reconstruction is partial, and open to debate—especially his claim that the United States could have prevailed in Vietnam if it had settled on a proper strategy. But by setting that ill-fated adventure in a larger context, he very pointedly underlines the false

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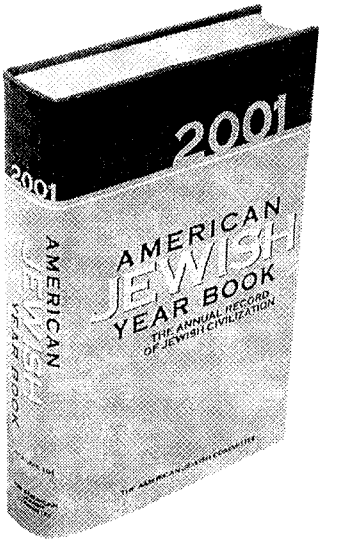

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lessons we have learned from it. Those lessons have been encapsulated in the so-called Powell/Weinberger doctrine, according to which we should never intervene anywhere except by means of overwhelming force, with an "exit strategy" in hand, in the company of allies, and with the clearly enunciated approval of the American public.

Legions of military officers, civilian leaders, and demagogues now recite these mantras as if they were self-evident; they are not, but their effects have been pernicious. These days, when we involve ourselves in foreign lands, we prefer to do so from the air, with bombs and missiles. If we send ground troops at all, we send as few as possible, barricade them into barbed-wire-protected blockhouses, and attempt to restrict their interaction with locals. We send out imperious calls for others to commit troops for peacekeeping or contribute to international aid, while insisting that we will be involved only briefly and will abandon the area totally as soon as possible.

The recent crescendo of dislike for America around the world, may, in fact, have something to do with this approach. What we take for resentment of our power may be resentment of our unwillingness to use that power to help people directly as we did in the past. In the first half of the 20th century, a Nicaraguan, Haitian, Samoan, Filipino, or Dominican could see for himself the benefits that came with American interference in his life. What can we promise to the Iraqis now? To the Haitians? To the Somalis? What will we be able to say to the Afghans in a few years' time?

Our only hope of reestablishing and maintaining a secure peace, Boot suggests, lies in restoring the traditions overturned in Southeast Asia and in shedding our inhibitions about the exercise of American power that were forged in the aftermath of that war. By almost all the examples of our history, as well as by rational examination, it is clear that we will not succeed in Afghanistan until we have helped to establish a stable, viable, legitimate regime in Kabul and to rebuild that country's ravaged economic, social, and political infrastructure. This hardly means staying there forever, but few courses of action could be worse than to have smashed the Taliban and al Qaeda and then to have simply abandoned Afghanistan to its fate. As this fine book demonstrates, that *is not* the American way.

A Little Bit Nutty

Blinded by the Right:
The Conscience of an
Ex-Conservative
by David Brock
Crown. 336 pp. $25.95

Reviewed by
Dan Seligman

DAVID BROCK, once a conservative journalist and now a liberal journalist, has written a memoir with two possible selling points.

First, there is the book's thesis: that the country's free institutions are threatened by a far-reaching conservative conspiracy. Hillary Clinton was widely ridiculed after she appeared on the *Today Show* in 1998 and broached the idea of a "vast right-wing conspiracy," seemingly in a desperate effort to persuade herself that the emerging rumors about Monica Lewinsky were part of the plot. But Brock believes he has the facts proving that Mrs. Clinton was basically right (even though, in a risible qualification, he says that "I might have quibbled with the word 'vast'"). Indeed, Brock claims to have been part of the conspiracy. He sees himself as bearing witness to the ineffable wickedness

DAN SELIGMAN *is a contributing editor at* Forbes.

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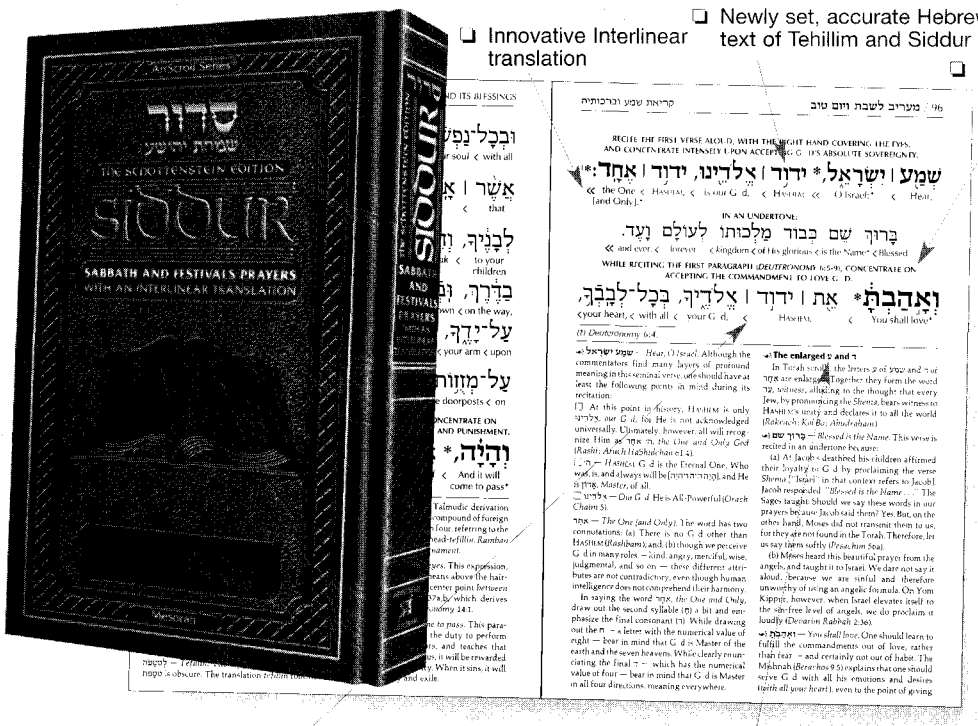

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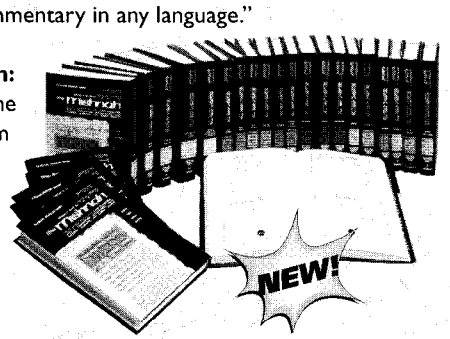

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of the right-wing media and the malevolent power brokers and billionaires who use it.

The book's second selling point is that it serves up the spectacle of a medium-name writer confessing a mile a minute to dishonest reporting, lies and hypocrisies, self-loathing, thoughts of suicide, and a desperate effort "to fill my unmet private emotional needs through my professional life." On top of everything else—and plainly supporting the count of self-loathing—is the fact that during much of his career as a conservative, Brock was a closet homosexual writing for publications (especially the *American Spectator*) that were invincibly hostile to the homosexual movement. He is a gifted story-teller, and I would guess that a lot of readers will find this "my life is a mess" stuff enormously interesting, in a creepy kind of way.

True, they may also discern a certain tension between the book's title and the author's insistence that he always knew exactly what he was doing. In addition, readers attracted to the personal-depravity line will have to put up with heavy doses of psychobabble. Having now concluded, for example, that Anita Hill was telling the truth when she claimed to have been sexually harassed by Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, Brock must explain what was going on in his head when he wrote his 1993 best-selling book slamming Hill as a fraud ("a little bit nutty and a little bit slutty," in his often-quoted summary). Here is his lame explanation: "After all, my career path rewarded party-line polemics, not independent thinking. . . . I had already shown an ability to sequester my conscience and sublimate my own values so that I could belong to the movement."

The author is, of course, hardly the only character taking hits in this book. It is cattily gossipy. Brock mentions that at one point he was in a panic because Frank Rich of the *Times* had said that his writing was "misogynist," and some people thought Rich was "outing" him. Apparently he wasn't, but later Brock does a little outing himself. His victim is Matt Drudge, the Internet newshound—though, to be sure, there is a lawyer-driven footnote in which the reader is formally told that Drudge has denied being gay.

Most of Brock's cattiness takes the form of searching out the detail that makes his victims seem strange or ridiculous. But he often leaves you baffled and suspicious about his information. Interviewing a source he dislikes, we are told that the guy has been joined for the interview "by his lugubrious wife, who wore black hosiery with the toes cut out." We are also told that Christopher Hitchens, with whom Brock once had dinner, was "seemingly unshowered." We are told that Arnaud de Borchgrave, then the editor of the *Washington Times*, did push-ups in his underwear in his office. And we are told that Robert Bork drinks Glenfiddich Scotch and gets sore at hosts who have not stocked it when he drops by uninvited after dinner.

How does he know any of this? While confessing to being a serial liar, Brock insists that deep down inside, he knows the difference between truth and lies and, when in truth mode, cleaves to the highest standards. At one point, he pledges allegiance to what he calls "the cardinal rule of the journalism profession, that every allegation must have at least two sources before it may be printed." I have been in the so-called profession of journalism since before Brock was born (which was in 1963), and I had never previously heard of this rule. But I cannot help noting that there seems to be only one source for the Glenfiddich story.

DAVID BROCK's life was something of a mess long before he got into journalism. His childhood years were spent in a New Jersey suburban environment. His father was a marketing executive and Reagan Republican whose views also incorporated detestation of homosexuals. So David's first problem, discovered at age eleven, was his romantic interest in boys. Another problem, for both him and his sister, was that they had been adopted but were not allowed to mention this to anybody.

Not too surprisingly, David decided early on that he was a liberal Democrat. When college time came, he chose the University of California at Berkeley because of its leftist/activist traditions and its considerable distance from his home.

During his Berkeley years, Brock started living openly as a homosexual, but also revolted against the Left. The latter happened when, as a reporter for the *Daily Californian*, he attended a lecture by Jeane Kirkpatrick and observed her being howled down by radical students yelling about death squads in El Salvador and splashing simulated blood over the lectern. Shaken by the event and the arguments it trig-

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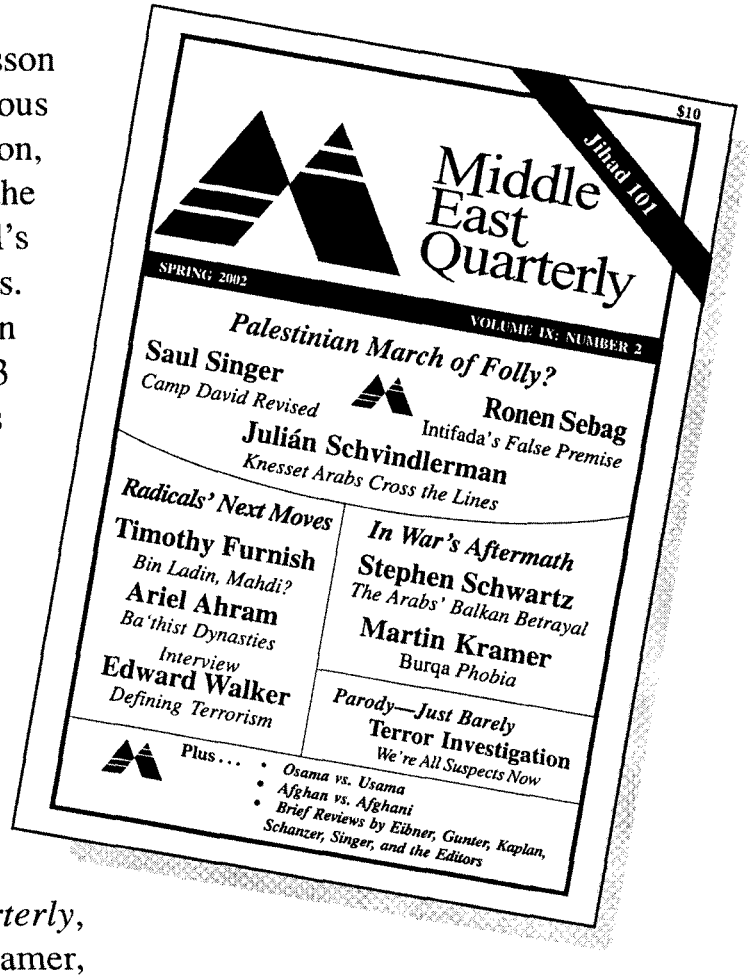

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gered, Brock gradually found that he had turned into a conservative and was spending days in Berkeley's library reading back issues of COMMENTARY.

While at Berkeley, too, he told his first truly consequential lie, involving an intramural argument at the *Daily Cal*. Once the lie was exposed, Brock—who was expecting to be voted editor-in-chief—was disgraced and lost the election. Still, he was plainly a writing talent, with a certain degree of political sophistication, and in the years after he graduated he had no trouble getting assignments. At age twenty-three, he landed a real job working for *Insight*, the weekly magazine of the Reverend Sun Myung Moon's *Washington Times*.

At this point he was again in the closet but increasingly well connected in the capital's expansive gay community, within which, Brock tells us, there were many high-level Reagan-administration officials (whom he refers to as the "laissez fairies"). His next move was to the Heritage Foundation (where he had the fancy title of John M. Olin fellow in congressional studies). Presumably, the conservative Brock had no political differences with the Heritage Foundation itself, but the new liberal Brock writes about Heritage like a reporter for the *Daily Worker*:

> While the corporations [that supported it financially] were primarily interested in funding anti-regulatory, anti-tax, and anti-labor-union research and advocacy, many of them also saw the need to protect and expand overseas investment opportunities by underwriting the anti-Communist cause.

For reasons that are not entirely clear, Brock's next career move was to knock on the door of the *American Spectator*, for which he soon became a star writer. His depiction of life at the *Spectator* is uniformly savage, and it is difficult—especially for someone who read and got a lot out of that magazine over many years—to judge how much of the portrait is accurate. The main charge is that the *Spectator*, never profitable, was beholden to a number of moneyed backers, of whom the most important by far was Richard Mellon Scaife. According to Brock, it was Scaife's preoccupation with Clinton that led to "Troopergate" (an effort to get Arkansas state troopers to implicate the President in sexual shenanigans while governor) and the "Arkansas Project" (an elaborate attempt to find criminality in Whitewater and other goings-on in the state).

Brock appears to be under the impression that both of these efforts have been totally discredited. But in the wake of the Lewinsky saga, it seems reasonable to believe that the troopers were on to something (even if their recollections were imprecise and their motives sleazy). And, in the wake of Independent Counsel Robert Ray's recent final report on Whitewater, it is all too clear that crimes took place, that close Clinton associates were found guilty in court, and that the administration had worked hard to impede investigation into the case.

What is ultimately most fatuous about Brock's book is its overwrought insistence that the events he observed and participated in might be viewed as a serious "conspiracy" against American democracy. It takes a fair amount of hysteria to conclude that impeachment talk in 1997 signified "a frame of mind in the right wing that was willing to employ extra-constitutional means to achieve, essentially, a coup d'état in the country." And it takes a lot of self-inflation to write that "events in which I played a central role . . . illuminate for others the dangers I see in an empowered conservative movement." The events in question mainly involved writing books and articles, and most of the media that sustain this line of work are liberal, not conservative. That is not "right-wing paranoia," as Brock would have it.

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On the day Saddam Hussein falls, there will be dancing in the streets of Baghdad. The country will not implode. Military analysts will ponder a victory that was less costly than many projected. States such as Syria and Iran will proclaim their aversion to terrorism. NATO will forget its early opposition.

Now, during the prebattle period, naysayers are having their day. Why Iraq? It is no worse than others on the "axis of evil." After all, Iran has longer-range missiles and sells more weapons. North Korea may already be nuclear.

They caution against, in Al Gore's words, "wishful thinking based on best-case scenarios." **Iraq is tougher than the Taliban;** the Iraqi National Congress is no Northern Alliance.

And they note international concern. The Saudis have an excess of caution, and the Turks, an excess of Kurds. Impoverished Moscow and wealthy France see billions in unpaid Iraqi debt. Other European friends resent seeing their military irrelevance displayed.

For all its malfeasance, however, Iran is a society where political evolution seems plausible. North Korea plays a reckless game fueled by the paranoia of its leadership. But it has no external designs, and past conduct suggests a willingness to rein in its most troublesome programs, for a price.

Saddam's Iraq is in a class by itself. It has launched two wars against neighboring states and fired Scud missiles against a third. Saddam attempted to kill a former U.S. president and routinely violates "no-fly zones" established to limit his ability to annihilate his own people. Iraq has used chemical weapons on the battlefield and to quash domestic unrest. Saddam maintained a covert nuclear program and sought to develop biological weapons, harassing United Nation inspectors sent to enforce the ban. The compelling insight embraced by the decision to dislodge Saddam is that **the war against terrorism cannot be won if the war against weapons of mass destruction is lost.**

Before the Persian Gulf War, military experts exaggerated Iraqi military power. In the event, Saddam's "battle-hardened" divisions were depleted by desertion, their morale shattered by indiscipline and American bombs. Save for a lucky Scud missile that crashed into military barracks in Dhahran, the United States lost more troops to "friendly fire" than to Iraqi guns.

Today Iraq's army is even smaller, less well equipped, and less prepared than it was before the Persian Gulf War. And the U.S. advantage in highly accurate weapons—formidable then—is now overwhelming.

Nor should the comfort of friends like Saudi Arabia be controlling. Their tolerance of the antics of Osama bin Laden and other terrorists operating against anyone save the royal family has been well reported, as has the vitriolic brand of Islam taught in Saudi-financed schools. Turkey has some legitimate concerns, but they will fade if Kurdish nationalism is held in check.

As to NATO, its focus is Europe. Elsewhere, differences are common. We broke with our British and French friends over the 1956 Sinai campaign. There were differences too over Vietnam, and today, over Israel. But at the end of the day, NATO members too will cheer the fall of Saddam and relish the reduced threat his demise will signal.

— Robert Zelnick

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A world of ideas on public policy.

New Hope For AIDS Sufferers in Africa

by Merle A. Sande, M.D.

Sub-Saharan Africa faces enormous problems as it struggles with the AIDS pandemic, but the Western world can lend a vital helping hand. Today, most observers acknowledge that the biggest challenge facing the continent is not the availability or price of anti-retroviral and other drugs, but the lack of an adequate primary healthcare infrastructure. Throughout Africa, medical professionals must operate within hard-pressed healthcare systems that cannot cope with the enormous challenges facing them. By bringing resources to bear on this deficit, Western healthcare providers and industry – in partnership with Western governments – can improve these conditions.

An international coalition – the Academic Alliance for AIDS Care and Prevention in Africa – will break ground in 2002 on the first large-scale HIV/AIDS clinic in Africa. The Academic Alliance consists of five professors of medicine from North American medical schools and eight professors of medicine, pediatrics, and public health from Makerere University Medical School in Kampala, Uganda. Pfizer Inc and the Pfizer Foundation are providing $11 million over three years to fund construction and staffing of the clinic, which will be located at Makerere University. Pfizer is also donating its antifungal medicine Diflucan® *(fluconazole)* for use in treating HIV/AIDS patients suffering from cryptococcal meningitis and esophageal candidiasis.

Expected to open in late 2002, the new clinic will provide state-of-the-art diagnosis and treatment of HIV, tuberculosis, opportunistic infections, and sexually-transmitted diseases.

> ***The new HIV/AIDS clinic being established by the Academic Alliance and Makerere University exemplifies the vital role that public-private partnerships play in checking the AIDS pandemic***

These capabilities will allow a quantum leap in training in AIDS care by giving clinicians access to previously unavailable information about levels of immune competence and HIV viral load. Once the facility is fully operational, it will treat many thousands of AIDS patients annually according to the latest standards of care. The clinic will also train approximately eighty clinicians each year in the most advanced techniques for treating AIDS. These medical professionals will then return to their own institutions to train many more, multiplying the new facility's impact. The clinic will hopefully serve as a model for the establishment of many others like it throughout the continent.

The establishment of the Makerere clinic is a vital first step in the larger project of strengthening Africa's medical infrastructure, replicating it across the continent, and bringing the latest medicines to bear on treating this disease. Pharmaceutical companies have expanded access to needed medicines in Africa through donations and price reductions. But the continent continues to need a better delivery system for medical services to ensure proper dosing, education, and treatment of HIV/AIDS patients.

The training provided at the clinic will pave the way for wider access to anti-retroviral therapies throughout Africa. And it will help African medical professionals provide their AIDS patients the same enhanced care that developed-world patients have come to expect.

The program will also conduct critical operational research to determine the most effective ways to prevent HIV transmission, as well as to treat the infection and its complications. In addition to training African clinicians in HIV/AIDS care, the program will provide training in translational and clinical science for African students and physicians.

Anti-retroviral drugs are an essential part of the solution to the AIDS pandemic, but they are only part of that solution. The new HIV/AIDS clinic being established by the Academic Alliance and Makerere University exemplifies the vital role that public-private partnerships play in checking the AIDS pandemic. This initiative offers new hope and a brighter future to Africa's 25 million HIV-infected people.

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